“Little Green Men”:
a primer on
Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013–2014

NOTE: This is an UNCLASSIFIED version of the original document.

This publication is a work of the United States Government in accordance with Title 17, United States Code, sections 101 and 105.

Published by:
The United States Army Special Operations Command
Fort Bragg, North Carolina

Reproduction in whole or in part is permitted for any purpose of the United States government. Nonmateriel research on special warfare is performed in support of the requirements stated by the United States Army Special Operations Command, Department of the Army. This research is accomplished at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory by the National Security Analysis Department, a nongovernmental agency operating under the supervision of the USASOC Sensitive Activities Division, Department of the Army.

The opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed or implied within are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or any other government agency. The intent is to share knowledge, generate discussion, and solicit input on the topic. This document is a working draft that will be updated with additional information and will eventually become part of a complete case study.

Comments correcting errors of fact and opinion, filling or indicating gaps of information, and suggesting other changes that may be appropriate should be addressed to:

United States Army Special Operations Command
G-3X, Sensitive Activities
2929 Desert Storm Drive
Fort Bragg, NC 28310

All ARIS products are available from USASOC at www.soc.mil under the ARIS link.

Contents

Executive Summary 1

PART I. CONTEXT AND THEORY OF RUSSIAN UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE 5

The Evolution of Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, 1991–2014 8

- Intervention in Lithuania, 1991 9
- Intervention in Transnistria, 1990–1992 10
- Intervention in Chechnya, 1994–1996 11
- Dagestan and the Second Chechen War, 1999–2009 12
- Intervention in Georgia, 2008 13

Russian Information Warfare 14

- Schools of Thought on Geopolitics and Information Warfare in Russia 15
  - Igor Panarin 15
  - Alexandr Dugin 16
- The Gerasimov Model 17

PART II. THE RUSSIAN UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE CAMPAIGN IN UKRAINE, 2013–2014 21

Historical and Political Context 21

Political Framework Leading up to Euromaidan 24

Russian Intervention in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine 33

- The Players 33
- The Motivations 36
  - Domestic Political Stability and Incentives 37
  - Counter Eastward Progression of Western Economic and Security Institutions 37
  - Geostrategic Control of the Black Sea Region 38
  - Maintain Buffer of Russian Influence in Peripheral States against the West 39
  - Strengthen EEU in the Former Soviet Sphere of Influence 39
  - Incorporate Ethnic Russians 40

Russian Order of Battle 40
Military Forces 41
SPETSNAZ 43
Russian-Backed Proxy Organizations in Ukraine 43
Russian-Backed Agents in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine 45
Russian Information Warfare in Ukraine 46
International Information Themes 48
Indoctrination of Ethnic Russians in Ukraine 48
Domestic Messaging 49
The Gerasimov Model in Action: Russian Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, 2013–2014 49
Covert Origins 53
Escalations (February 20–22) 54
Russian Operations in Crimea 55
Start of Conflict Activities (February 22–26) 55
Crisis (February 27–March 15) 56
Resolution (March 16–19) 57
Restoration of Peace (March 19–31) 58
Russian Operations in Eastern Ukraine 58
Start of Conflict Activities (March 1–August 1) 58
Crisis (August 1–31) 61
Resolution (September 1–November 30) 61
Restoration of Peace (November 30–Present) 62
Conclusion 62
Notes 63
Bibliography 65

Figures

Russian expansion in the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries 8
The role of nonmilitary methods in interstate conflict resolution 18
Ukrainian ten-hryvnia note featuring Ivan Mazepa 21
Stepan Bandera 21
Map of Ukraine 22
The Orange Revolution 23
Chernobyl reactor 4 23
Viktor Yanukovych 25
Languages in Ukraine 28
Euromaidan 29
Population density of Ukraine 30
Sergei Aksyonov 31
Denis Pushilin 32
The oligarchs 34
Russian leadership 35
History of NATO enlargement 38
Igor Girkin (also known as Strelkov) 45
Alexey Mozgovoy 46
The role of nonmilitary methods in interstate conflict resolution 50
Main phases (stages) of conflict development in Crimea 51
Main phases (stages) of conflict development in eastern Ukraine 52

The black fur hat seemed to be just as much a part of the Serb as the thick, black beard that hung below his clavicle. On the shoulder of his woodland camouflage uniform was a patch with a skull and crossbones depicted on it.

He stopped in front of the Orthodox Church in Sevastopol to pray for a few moments before sharing why he and his compatriots came to Crimea.

"We've come simply to support the referendum and to share our experiences from the barricades in Kosovo and Metohija and similar situations," he said. "Our main goal is to prevent war and bloodshed and to prevent this area from falling victim to the lies of America and the European Union, because it would be better to resolve this issue internally."

As night fell, he directed operations at the Belbek checkpoint with other Serbian War veterans. They were not the only outsiders in Crimea. Cossacks, motorcycle gangs, and thugs looking for work flooded into the region, providing muscle that could be controlled from Moscow. They were all irregulars for an irregular war.[1]

♦♦♦

The RT television camera scanned the crowd on the Maidan and then zoomed in on her. Dressed conspicuously in fashionable dress jeans and an expensive black silk blouse, she raged at the small, docile group that had gathered around. Her words seemed over the top, almost comical in their invective. To anyone old enough, she sounded like a Nazi from the 1930s. She spouted rhetoric about the need to "obey" the European Union and its "sponsor," the United States. "We must seek out and crush the hated minorities in Crimea and the Donbas!"

In Sevastopol an elderly, grieving mother wailed inconsolably over her dead son—murdered by the illegitimate Kyiv regime. Olexandr was her only son, a proud factory worker and patriot. The fascist monsters who invaded the city sought him out because his accent revealed Russian ancestry. "They won't stop until they kill us all!" she cried. "When will Vladimir Putin rescue us?"

Standing atop a wall outside a chemical plant in Kharkiv, a stern, serious woman lectured the crowd on the history of Ukraine and its proud heritage of loyalty to Russia and heroic resistance against invaders. She rattled off figures touting the strength of the Eurasian Economic Union and how it is vastly superior to the EU's faltering, authoritarian economy. Dressed in a worker's simple dress, she appealed to the listeners' patriotism and self-interest, insisting that hope lay east and tyranny west.

The three women could not be more disparate: a fiery champion of the Kyiv regime trying to inspire ethnic conflict, a simple peasant woman aching from the pain of losing a son to a war she does not understand, a hard-nosed proletariat woman fed up with encroaching Western liberalism and fascism.

Photographic analysis, however, reveals the truth—it is the same woman in all three cities.[2]

♦♦♦

The contrast between the two men could not be more revealing. The first sought exposure, the second anonymity.

"Do you have a pass to be here? Journalists are not allowed here," his stern voice said from behind the balaclava covering all but his eyes. Not only was his face hidden, but his green and black digital patterned kit that shouted "special forces" rather than "conscript" had no insignia or markings.

"Says who?" challenged the reporter. In jeans and designer jacket, the bespectacled on-screen personality's voice and posture were brazen, as if the rolling cameras behind him could trump the soldier's Kalashnikov.

"You're not allowed here," the soldier repeated, trying to obtain authority through firm repetition.

"Who says that we're not allowed here?"

"The Ministry of Defense."

"Of what country?"

"Ukraine."

"Ok, show me that you are a Ukrainian soldier."

Suddenly, the trooper was summoned away. The journalist posed and looked directly into the camera.

"So the situation is kinda tricky because the soldiers up there said they were part of the [self] defense force of Crimea. But, then when we come down here another one comes over and says we have to leave under orders of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry."

It was clear that the invaders who the Ukrainians dubbed "Little Green Men" were neither.[3]

“Little Green Men”: A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013–2014

Executive Summary

This document is intended as a primer—a brief, informative treatment—concerning the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. It is an unclassified expansion of an earlier classified version that drew from numerous classified and unclassified sources, including key US Department of State diplomatic cables. For this version, the authors drew from open source articles, journals, and books. Because the primer examines a very recent conflict, it does not reflect a comprehensive historiography, nor does it achieve in-depth analysis. Instead, it is intended to acquaint the reader with the essential background to and course of the Russian intervention in Ukraine from the onset of the crisis in late 2013 through the end of 2014. The document’s key points are summarized below.

Part I. Context and Theory of Russian Unconventional Warfare

- Key Principles
    - Strategy to deal with states and regions on the periphery of the Russian Federation
    - Primacy of nonmilitary factors: politics, diplomacy, economics, finance, information, and intelligence
    - Primacy of the information domain: use of cyberwarfare, propaganda, and deception, especially toward the Russian-speaking populace
    - Persistent (rather than plausible) denial of Russian operations
    - Use of unidentified local and Russian agents
    - Use of intimidation, bribery, assassination, and agitation
    - Start of military activity without war declaration; actions appear to be spontaneous actions of local troops/militias
    - Use of armed civilian proxies, self-defense militias, and imported paramilitary units (e.g., Cossacks, Vostok Battalion) instead of, or in advance of, regular troops
    - Asymmetric, nonlinear actions

- For the purpose of clarity and uniformity within this study, the authors use the term *unconventional warfare* to embrace the wide variety of military, informational, political, diplomatic, economic, financial, cultural, and religious activities Russia employed in Ukraine.
- Evolution of Russian unconventional warfare. Russian intervention in Ukraine has featured refined and modernized techniques evolved through observation and analysis of Western methods (the color revolutions, Arab Spring) and Russian experiences since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Specifically, they drew lessons from interventions in:
    - Lithuania, 1991
    - Transnistria, 1990–1992
    - Chechnya (and Dagestan), 1994–1996 (1999–2009)
    - Georgia, 2008
- Russian information warfare has emerged as a key component of Russian strategy. Igor Panarin and Alexandr Dugin are the primary theorists.
- Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov's model for interstate conflict reflects the growing importance of nonkinetic factors in Russian strategy.

Part II. Russian Unconventional Warfare in Ukraine, 2013–2014

- Historical Context
    - Ukraine's historical, cultural, religious, and economic ties to Russia make it a vital interest to Moscow.
    - Western encroachment into the Russian sphere of influence, primarily through North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) expansion and European Union (EU) economic ties, stimulated a reactionary movement among Russian conservatives to stop the loss of peripheral states to the West.
    - The Crimean peninsula, with a majority of ethnic Russians, includes Russia's Black Sea naval base of Sevastopol and is a vital interest to Moscow.
    - The Maidan movement is viewed as a product of Western—especially American—conspiracy.
    - Vladimir Putin has boosted his popularity by portraying himself as the defender of Russian nationalism and Russian Orthodoxy in Ukraine.

- Russian Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures in Ukraine, 2013–2014
    - Political organization within the conflict region to create and sustain pro-Russian political parties, unions, and paramilitary groups
    - Recruitment and support of regional SPETSNAZ
    - Importation of "little green men"—unidentified Russian agents (usually SPETSNAZ) to organize and lead protests and paramilitary operations
    - Importation of Cossack, Chechen, Serbian, and Russian paramilitary "volunteers"
    - Persistent (rather than plausible) denial of Russian operations, even in the face of photographic evidence and firsthand testimonials
    - Domination of television, radio, and social media through the use of highly trained operatives, including "hacktivists" and seemingly independent bloggers; use of Russia Today television as a highly effective propaganda tool; use of professional actors who portray themselves as pro-Russian Ukrainians
    - Use of blackmail, bribery, intimidation, assassination, and kidnapping against regional political opponents and government officials, including police and military officials
    - Use of "relief columns" to import weapons, soldiers, equipment, and supplies to pro-Russian forces
    - Small-scale invasion and precision operations by conventional Battalion Tactical Groups (BTGs) based along the Russian border
    - Issuing Russian passports to pro-Russian populations and touting Moscow's need to defend the Russian diaspora against alleged abuses

Conclusion

- Driven by a desire to roll back Western encroachment into the Russian sphere of influence, the current generation of Russian leaders has crafted a multidisciplinary art and science of unconventional warfare. Capitalizing on deception, psychological manipulation, and domination of the information domain, their approach represents a notable threat to Western security.
- The new forms of Russian unconventional warfare challenge the structure of the NATO Charter, because they obviate the appearance of "armed invasion."

Part I. Context and Theory of Russian Unconventional Warfare

"Russia has found a recipe to counteract the color revolutions."

—Igor Panarin

In his recent work entitled "The Technology of Victory," Igor Panarin, a leading advocate for Russian information warfare, boasted about the nearly flawless Russian operation to seize and annex Crimea. He celebrated the campaign's success in avoiding armed violence and preempting American interference. While pointing to neoconservative ideals of justice, spirituality, and "true" liberty, he praised the use of blackmail, intimidation, and deception in the face of international dithering in the West. He attributed the success to the personal leadership and direct control of Vladimir Putin.[4]

The Russian intervention in Crimea and eastern Ukraine in 2013–2014 demonstrated a radical departure from the paradigm of twentieth-century conventional warfare and an effective evolution of techniques Moscow employed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the Baltic states (1990–1991), Transnistria (1990–1992), Chechnya and Dagestan (1994–2009), and the Russo–Georgian War of 2008. The rapid pace of events culminating in Russia's annexation of Crimea and Kyiv's acquiescence in greater autonomy for eastern Ukraine took Western leaders by surprise and raised fears that Russia's success in Ukraine may lead to further aggression in the

Key Principles of Russian Unconventional Warfare

- Strategy to deal with states and regions on the periphery of the Russian Federation
- Primacy of nonmilitary factors: politics, diplomacy, economics, finance, information, and intelligence
- Primacy of the information domain: use of cyberwarfare, propaganda, and deception, especially toward the Russian-speaking populace
- Persistent denial of Russian operations
- Use of unidentified local and Russian agents
- Use of intimidation, bribery, assassination, and agitation
- Start of military activity without war declaration; actions appear to be spontaneous actions of local troops/militias
- Use of armed civilian proxies, self-defense militias, and imported paramilitary units (e.g., Cossacks, Vostok Battalion) instead of, or in advance of, regular troops
- Asymmetric, nonlinear actions

Baltic states, Moldova, or Poland. Moscow's goals vary from outright annexation to the creation and discipline of weakened states all along its periphery. Russia's unconventional warfare techniques challenge the provisions of Article 5 of the NATO Charter because the treaty invokes collective defense in response to "armed attack" by another power. Throughout the campaigns in Ukraine, Moscow denied involvement and employed proxies and deception to obviate the stigma attached to a conventional armed invasion.[5]

The purpose of this document is to provide a primer on Russia's unconventional warfare operations in Ukraine. These principles will be explored later in a full study to draw out more detailed observations and insights on Russian unconventional warfare operations and to help further identify phases of Russia's nonlinear warfare approach. The title's reference to unconventional warfare is intended to include the full spectrum of Russian activities in the subject time frame (2013–2014), including diplomatic coercion, intimidation, bribery, manipulation of media, terror, subterfuge, sabotage, and a host of other kinetic and nonkinetic activities. There are many terms and concepts that contribute to the study of modern conflict, including *irregular warfare*, *hybrid warfare*, *new-generation warfare*, and others. Each term has competing definitions and nuances, and each adds value to the ongoing discussion and analysis. Russian activities in Ukraine featured elements of many of these ideas. But for the purpose of clarity and uniformity within this study, the authors use the term *unconventional warfare* to embrace the wide variety of military, informational, political, diplomatic, economic, financial, cultural, and religious activities observed and analyzed.

Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* examined the nature and course of conflicts among nations.[6] His main thesis was that the wars of princes and ideologies were in the past and that new conflict would be between civilizations. Huntington named eight such civilizations including Western, Islamic, Confucian, and Japanese civilizations. With the book's publication in 1993, readers could view the Iran-Iraq war, Operation Desert Storm, and the ongoing conflict in Israel and easily envision Huntington's description of the conflict between Western and Islamic civilizations. What was less obvious was the growing rift between the successor state to the Soviet Union—the rump state now called the Russian Federation—and the West. Moscow was emerging as the leader, champion, and oftentimes tyrant of the Slavic Orthodox civilization. Incisive observers might have remembered that Ukraine was the seam between Western and Slavic Orthodox civilizations, and that the Russian nation traces its history to the Kievan Rus' Empire. The division between the Latin Church and Orthodoxy was exemplified by the 1472 marriage of the Grand Prince of Moscow Rus Ivan III to Sophia Paleologue, claimant to the throne of the Byzantine Empire, at the recommendation of Pope Paul II in an unsuccessful attempt to join the two civilizations. Still, through this union, Russian autocrats believed themselves to be the true inheritors of civilization, with Moscow the "third Rome,"

following Constantinople. Ivan III began to refer to himself as Tsar, the Russian derivation of Caesar. Vladimir Putin's interest and intervention in Ukraine emanated from these deep roots and, more recently, from the dramatic experiences of the Soviet Union as it teetered toward its demise.

US national security benefits from geography. The world's two largest oceans provide a formidable barrier for any would-be invader. Russia does not enjoy such an advantage. Having endured multiple invasions from the west, east, and south throughout history, Russian and Soviet leaders developed defensive precepts that began with a buffer zone of border states. After their rise to superpower in World War II, the Soviets invaded Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. They invaded Afghanistan on Christmas Eve 1979 and became embroiled in a long war against insurgents that became known as the Soviets' Vietnam. Each of these interventions occurred in order to bring to heel governments that were attempting to distance themselves from Russian control. Moscow's post-Cold War incursions into the peripheral states and regions surrounding the Russian Federation occurred within this historical context that, since tsarist times, has featured concern, obsession, and paranoia about the defensive buffer.[7]

The rise of the Polish labor union movement in August 1980 led to unconventional warfare in a Soviet client state, but the actions did not result in an invasion. As the Soviet Army became mired in Afghanistan, a noncommunist labor movement emerged in Poland and rapidly subsumed one-third of Poland's workforce. Solidarnosc, or Solidarity, used nonviolent, civil disobedience to achieve its aims. Still, the movement's rise triggered a response in Moscow that led to serious consideration for yet another eastern European invasion. US intelligence indications and warnings led to an assessment that Soviet military intervention was likely. Soviet forces conducted a dress rehearsal in anticipation of a potential invasion as early as December 1980, and this rehearsal seemed to follow the pattern they employed before entering Czechoslovakia in 1968. Soviet leaders Leonid Brezhnev (general secretary from 1966 through 1982) and Yuri Andropov (1982–1984) elected not to respond with outright invasion. The Polish state instead imposed martial law but was forced to reckon with Solidarity eventually. The movement became a de facto political party and its leader, Lech Walesa, was elected president in 1990. Some historians suggest this was a major factor in the eventual dissolution of the Soviet Union. Despite the movement's contribution to the Soviet dissolution, Russia's current leadership likely considered and recognized the potential of using similar large popular movements to foment nonviolent insurrection. These principles certainly emerged within Crimea and eastern Ukraine.[8]

The Evolution of Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, 1991–2014

From the sixteenth century Russia has expanded its control of territory through military invasion, intimidation, economic suasion, and subterfuge. Over four centuries Russian expansion eastward and southward proceeded at the remarkable average of fifty-five square miles per day. Cossack bands, agents masquerading as tradesmen or explorers, and conventional military units were the primary means of securing Russian control over the vast swaths of land incorporated across Asia.[9]

Russian expansion in the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries

By the twentieth century, tsarist Russia was in its last throes, but the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 replaced the anachronistic regime with a vigorous, ideological power. Russia was hungry to reassert its control over what it considered its natural sphere of influence, stretching from eastern Europe to the Pacific and from the Arctic Ocean to the Caucasus and central Asia. The trauma of World War II gave rise to the superpower conflict of the Cold War, and the Soviet government assumed its new mantle of the leader of the Second World by installing authoritarian puppet regimes throughout its periphery. With the precipitous collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the rump state of Russia struggled to find and reclaim its place in the world order. Reactionary elements within the government, intelligence services, and armed forces found common cause with the new economic elites and

elements of the Russian Orthodox Church in desiring to recoup the loss of empire. Thus, even before the de jure dissolution of the USSR, Moscow began to reassert its control over members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Russian methods of intervention evolved from one conflict to the next as leaders sought the most efficient methods of bringing weaker powers to heel while avoiding the stigma of outright imperialism, invasion, and war with the West.[10]

Intervention in Lithuania, 1991[11]

When the Baltic states (Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia) each declared independence from the Soviet Union and deprecated Moscow's former annexation as illegal, the Russian government under Mikhail Gorbachev responded by attempting to crack down on Lithuania. The government in Vilnius had declared independence in March 1990, but the ensuing months featured economic crises, rampant inflation, political upheaval, and ethnic tensions as pro-Russian populations within the country (including ethnic Russians and pro-Moscow Poles) protested what they saw as discrimination. The "Russian diaspora" problem became a common theme in this and future Russian interventions. Protection of ethnic Russians teetered between being a genuine objective and a convenient—even artificial—contrivance by which Moscow could justify military invasion. During the January Events of 1991, the Russians exerted political pressure through their control of the Lithuanian Communist Party and the Yedinstvo Movement, which agitated against the government's independence. Russian operatives employed propaganda and organized worker protests that on the surface were aimed at overpriced consumer goods but fundamentally were vectored more at the government's independence from the Soviet Union. These events were followed by protesters attempting to storm government buildings—a tactic that would be repeated in future conflicts. The Soviets deployed military forces into the country, allegedly to ensure law and order. The forces included Spetsgruppa A (Alpha Group)—a counterterrorist unit created by the KGB in 1974 that operates under the direct supervision of the government in Moscow—along with a unit of paratroopers.

The January Events commenced with Soviet military forces seizing key government buildings and media infrastructure on January 11. Concurrently the Lithuanian Communist Party announced that its National Salvation Committee was the sole legitimate government in Lithuania. Soviet forces continued to assault and occupy government facilities while unarmed civilians mounted protests and demonstrations against the aggression. On January 13, Soviet forces moved to take over the Vilnius TV Tower. Tanks drove through demonstrators, killing fourteen, and Soviet forces began to use live ammunition against civilians. When an independent television broadcasting station managed to transmit desperate pleas to the world decrying the Soviet invasion, international pressure on Moscow mounted.

This situation gave rise to another tactic that was to be repeated and refined in future interventions: denial. Gorbachev and his defense minister denied that Moscow had ordered any military action in Lithuania, claiming that the "bourgeois government" there had initiated the conflict by firing on ethnic Russians. Nevertheless, international and domestic reaction to the aggression caused the Soviets to cease large-scale military operations and instead use small-scale raids and intimidation. The Soviets signed a treaty with Lithuania on January 31, and subsequent elections saw massive popular support for independence. The Russians had been given their first post-Cold War lesson about wielding power abroad: large-scale conventional operations against sovereign states would invite unwanted scrutiny, international pressure, and domestic protest within Russia. To maintain their control over states on the periphery, they would have to employ power in a more clandestine, deniable fashion.

Intervention in Transnistria, 1990–1992[12]

The dissolution of the Soviet Union led to ethnic tensions in Moldova as well. The Popular Front there agitated for closer ties to Romania, the reestablishment of Moldovan as the sole official language, and a return to the Latin alphabet. Under Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost*, anti-Soviet sympathies grew, and ethnic Slavs in Transnistria and Gagauzia, who favored ties to the Soviets, formed an ad hoc government that sought autonomy from the rest of Moldova. War broke out in 1992 as Moldovan forces tried to suppress separatist militias in Transnistria. The Soviets fell back on an old tactic for handling such problems on the periphery: they sent Cossack volunteer units to assist the separatists. For several months Transnistrian militias and Cossacks, supported by the Soviet 14th Guards Army, fought Moldovan forces, which had support from Romania.

The strategic dynamics of the small war included Moldova's military weakness and the political and military strength of Transnistria. The latter came about because of the strong ethnic Russian majority in the disputed territory on the east bank of the Dniester River and the remnants of the Soviet 14th Army who remained in the area. Some of the unit's officers who had strong local ties defected to join the separatists, and others offered their support, at times turning over weapons and ammunition and training the militias. On July 3, 1992, the commander of the 14th Army launched a massive artillery strike against Moldovan forces, effectively destroying them and ending the military conflict. Transnistria thus became one of the four "frozen republics"—quasi-legal states left over from the Soviet occupation. As in past and future conflicts, Russian operatives in Transnistria branded the opposition as fascists attempting to install an illegal government over ethnic minorities.

Intervention in Chechnya, 1994–1996[13]

In September 1991 a popular coup ousted the communist government of Chechnya, the only one of the former federated states that had not come to terms with Russia as the Soviet Union dissolved. President Yeltsin attempted to put down the rebellion with Internal Troops, but the Russian forces were surrounded and compelled to withdraw. In 1993 the government of Chechnya declared full independence from Russia. The subsequent exit (both voluntary and forced) of Russian professionals caused a severe downturn in the economy. In response to the independence movement, Russian forces fighting in South Ossetia were positioned on the Chechen border. Russia began to provide funding, arms, training, and leadership to the opposition against the Chechen government, and in 1994 Russian forces joined the insurgents in two assaults on the Chechen capital of Grozny that failed catastrophically. During the campaign, Russia repeated its unconventional warfare tactics of supplying mercenary and volunteer forces, denying involvement, and using its own forces in support of the rebels. In December 1994 Russia launched an all-out invasion aimed at destroying the government of Dzhokhar Dudayev (who was president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, a breakaway state in the North Caucasus), but many within the Russian military and government protested the war, insisting that it would lead to another stalemate as in Afghanistan.

The dire predictions came true in short order. Dispirited, disorganized Russian troops suffered severe reverses. Because of the Russian conscripts' poor training and leadership, Russian forces inflicted horrendous casualties among the civilian population, including those who had originally supported the intervention as well as ethnic Russians. After months of bloody fighting, the invaders finally took Grozny, but the cost in civilian life attracted universal condemnation, including from former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. The war grinded on as Russian forces advanced to try to take control of the entire country. Public confidence in Boris Yeltsin plummeted. The war took on a new and dangerous dimension when the senior mufti in Chechnya declared a jihad against the Russian invaders, opening up the prospect of a wider Islamist war against Russia. On the last day of August 1996, the Russian government signed a cease-fire agreement with Chechen leaders, ending the First Chechen War.

As in the Lithuanian conflict, Moscow learned again that the large-scale use of conventional force to impose its will on the periphery caused more problems than it solved. The challenge of ensuring Russian control of regions and states remained, but Russian leadership began to cast about for different, more effective techniques for dealing with conflict. Ongoing war in the Caucasus required more conventional force operations, but unconventional warfare tactics rose in prominence for Russian planners.

Dagestan and the Second Chechen War, 1999–2009[14]

Radical Islamists within Chechnya were not content with the political gains of the First Chechen War but instead intended to carve out an Islamic state, joining the faithful from Chechnya and Dagestan. To that end they organized a two-thousand-man brigade of jihadists and crossed the border into Dagestan to aid Islamic separatists there. The response from the local government and its Russian support was slow, allowing the rebels to seize several villages. But Russia eventually staged an effective counterattack using ground troops and strong air attacks. Key to Russian success was the failure of the Islamists to gain the substantial popular support for which they had hoped. Instead, local villagers tended to view the Chechens as invaders and religious fanatics. The Russians expelled the invading forces, pushing them back into Chechnya, and commenced airstrikes against their strongholds there. This success led to the Second Chechen War.

In the aftermath of the war in Dagestan the Russian FSB (Federal Security Service) accused the oligarch billionaire Boris Berezovsky of conspiring with the Chechen Islamists to instigate the Dagestan war as a way of goading the Russians into attacking separatist Chechnya and providing access to the region's rich mineral resources. The case was never proven, but Berezovsky's involvement and opposition to Vladimir Putin (then head of the FSB) highlighted the growing role of Russia's super-rich elites and the need to engender cooperation between them and the Russian government. Oligarchs could pose a threat to Putin's agenda because, as Berezovsky put it in an interview, Russian capitalists at times had to interfere with political processes as a counterweight to ex-communists "who hate democracy and dream of regaining lost positions."[15] If Putin and his reactionary allies hoped to succeed in recapturing Russia's status as a great power and regional hegemon, they would have to make common cause with the oligarchs. That they were effective in doing so was critical to operations in Ukraine in 2014.

On the heels of their success against the Islamic International Brigade in Dagestan, the Russians invaded Chechnya to continue the fight and to reestablish Moscow's control of the region. This was Vladimir Putin's first war as the new prime minister of the Russian Federation. A string of bombings tied to Dagestani separatists and their Chechen allies served as a catalyst for invasion. Allying with pro-Russian militias against the Islamists, the Russians rapidly maneuvered to the Terek River, besieged Grozny, and methodically seized the city, largely destroying it in the process. Planners and leaders had learned hard lessons in the First Chechen War and applied them during this invasion. Conventional attacks were more deliberate and cautious, and the Russian forces focused on securing their rear area against insurgents and terrorist attacks. Throughout the spring of 2000 the Russian offensive moved into the mountains to destroy the remaining insurgent groups, including bands of Islamic foreign fighters.

After the initial military engagements, the Russian government sought to turn over most of the remaining conflict to its local proxies within Chechnya—primarily the police forces. Use of properly aligned proxies became another key feature of Russian unconventional warfare within the periphery. The FSB and MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) were the agencies that directed proxy forces—an organizational technique that would continue in future wars. From 1999 through 2009 Moscow directed a sustained campaign that effectively destroyed the Islamic insurgency in Chechnya and reasserted Russian control of the region.

Once again the political and economic situation in Chechnya was a key factor in Russian success. The separatist government proved unable to effectively administer the economy and rapidly lost popular support. The rift between separatist leader Aslan Maskhadov and the Islamists, and the growing strength of independent warlords, left the region's political framework fragmented and ripe for exploitation by the Russians. This environment allowed Russian forces to assume the mantle of liberators and protectors and furnished Moscow with an acceptable premise for invasion. The wars in Chechnya and Dagestan, however, were characterized by allegations of excessive use of force and indiscriminate use of violence against civilians. The charges and graphic images of the results of the Russian invasion threatened Putin's domestic political base and attracted unwanted criticism from human rights organizations and the international community. Because the wars were technically considered internal affairs, Moscow was able to deflect charges of aggression. Still, the global outrage in the wake of civilian deaths and the growing refugee problem motivated Putin's planners in the military and intelligence services to transfer control of the ongoing counterinsurgency operation to reliable proxies (i.e., local militias or imported paramilitary forces used in place of regular Russian troops).

Intervention in Georgia, 2008[16]

In the early 1990s Georgia had fought to regain control of the two breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but Russian support for the separatists foiled the plan and left the two regions with de facto independence. Russian citizens with Russian passports made up the majority of the population in South Ossetia, and in the face of further attempts by Georgia to reassert control there, Putin decided to strengthen Russian control. Georgia's application for NATO membership and the fact that the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline runs through the country underscored Moscow's intention to bring Georgia to heel.

In early summer 2008 Putin directed a series of intimidating moves, including overflights by Russian aircraft, the introduction of more forces (masquerading as peacekeepers or railway repair units) into Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and military training maneuvers in the region. US President George W. Bush sent his secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, to Tbilisi on a state visit, and American troops trained

with their Georgian counterparts. Putin and his allies in Moscow viewed this as American interference on the Russian periphery.

The situation heated up in early August as South Ossetian forces began shelling Georgian villages and Georgian forces responded. The Russians moved in more forces and began to evacuate civilians from the region. Georgian forces launched an attack into South Ossetia, initially seizing the key city of Tskhinvali. The Russians deployed units of the 58th Army along with paratroopers into the fight, and by August 11 the Georgian forces had been expelled from the region. Russian forces then followed up with attacks into Georgia, seized the city of Gori, and threatened the capital of Tbilisi. Simultaneously they opened a second front against Georgia through operations in Abkhazia and adjacent districts.

Throughout their operations, the Russians alternately denied involvement or downplayed the size and activities of their forces. They also introduced the use of information warfare on a scale previously unseen. Russian operatives employed cyberwarfare and strong propaganda to neutralize Georgia's warfighting options and to vilify them in the press as aggressors, even accusing them of genocide. The Russian military brought journalists into the theater of war to strengthen the message of Russia protecting the population from Georgian aggression. Moscow carefully managed television broadcasts both at home and in the region, highlighting atrocities that the Georgians allegedly inflicted on the population of South Ossetia.

Russian military forces performed notably better in the Georgian war than they had in the Chechen wars, in part due to a renewed reliance on professional soldiers instead of conscripts. However, strong Georgian air defenses were able to limit the use of Russian airpower, which complicated reconnaissance and the rapid deployment of Russian airborne forces. In general, Russian leaders viewed the relative success of the Georgian operation as an indicator of the need to continue modernization. Likewise, the brief campaign reiterated the key features of Russia's unconventional warfare along the periphery: (1) use of proxies when possible; (2) deniability to deflect international criticism and domestic political reaction; (3) use of information warfare, including propaganda and cyberwarfare; and (4) political preparation of subject populations and manipulation of economic conditions. All these factors would play roles in Russia's intervention in Ukraine in 2014.

Russian Information Warfare

Russian information warfare techniques are an amalgamation of (1) methods evolved within the Soviet Union (with roots as far back as tsarist Russia) and (2) deliberate developments in response to scrutiny of Western (especially Amer-

ican) operations in the twenty-first century. The revitalized doctrine, called *spetzpropaganda*, is taught in the Military Information and Foreign Languages Department of the Military University of the Ministry of Defense. As an academic discipline it reaches out to military personnel, intelligence operatives, journalists, and diplomats.

The doctrine specifies that an information campaign is multidisciplinary and includes politics, economics, social dynamics, military, intelligence, diplomacy, psychological operations, communications, education, and cyberwarfare. In general, Russian information warfare has in view the broad Russian-speaking diaspora that fragmented into the various post-Soviet era states. It aims at affecting the consciousness of the masses, both at home and abroad, and conditioning them for the civilizational struggle between Russia's Eurasian culture and the West. At its roots, the theory is military and nonmilitary, technological and social. Information warfare is likewise the chief tool with which the state achieves diplomatic leverage and attains its foreign policy goals. It links directly to geopolitics in service to the state and the Russian civilization. Through coordinated manipulation of the entire information domain (including newspapers, television, Internet websites, blogs, and other outlets), Russian operatives attempt to create a virtual reality in the conflict zone that either influences perceptions or (among some Russian-speaking audiences) replaces actual ground truth with pro-Russian fiction.[17]

> *According to Russian doctrine, information is a dangerous weapon. "It is cheap, it is a universal weapon, it has unlimited range, it is easily accessible and permeates all state borders without restrictions."*
>
> *—Jolanta Darczewska*

Schools of Thought on Geopolitics and Information Warfare in Russia

Two noted academics dominate the development of information warfare in Russia: Igor Panarin and Alexandr Dugin. Both men not only promulgate their doctrines, but they also have experience in prosecuting information warfare firsthand.

Igor Panarin

Igor Panarin holds doctoral degrees in political science and psychology. He is a member of the Military Academy of Science and currently serves as a professor in the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He is a former

KGB member and a close associate of Putin. His writings detail two periods of American-led information warfare targeting Russia: the first spanning from *perestroika* to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the second from 2000 on aimed at discrediting Vladimir Putin and keeping the former Soviet states fragmented. He attributes the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia (1989), "color" revolutions in former Soviet states (early 2000s), and the Arab Spring (2010–2012) to American conspiratorial influence.

In response to these threats Panarin advocates for a centrally controlled information warfare campaign that uses propaganda, intelligence, analysis, secret agents, media manipulation, and selected special operations to influence the masses and politicians. His method includes five cyclical stages: (1) forecasting and planning; (2) organization and stimulation; (3) feedback; (4) operation adjustment; and (5) performance control.[18]

Alexandr Dugin

Alexandr Dugin is a professor of political science, geopolitics, philosophy, and religious history at Lomonosov Moscow State University and the director of the Centre of Conservative Studies at Moscow State University. He is the leading proponent for "netwar," "net-centric warfare," and a "Eurasian network" designed to engage the so-called Atlantic network (i.e., the US-led Western coalition) in geopolitical battles within the former Soviet states and around the world. Dugin, like Panarin, sees the color revolutions as engineered by the United States to keep Russia fragmented and weak. He states that the Americans accomplished this goal through a broad application of net-centric warfare—a curious interpretation of American warfighting doctrine from the 1990s. As originally derived, net-centric warfare was a tactical/operational idea designed to use computer and communications networks linked with sensors to command and control widely dispersed military forces. Dugin extrapolated from that application and conceived of the theory as a geopolitical idea—linking not just joint military forces in a theater of war but rather the entire information apparatus of a state and culture in a contest for political and social domination. Having perceived this structure in the West, Dugin calls for a similar approach in Russia.

Dugin's Eurasian network would include political leaders, diplomats, scientists, military organizations, intelligence, media, and communications linked together to promulgate a geopolitical campaign to counter Western influence and information. He also insists that the creation of the network must be attended by a shift toward postmodernism, by which he seems to mean an evolution in Russian culture that can appeal to twenty-first-century masses. Dugin's theory and practice seem somewhat bipolar in that he pushes for a postmodern, postliberal approach but integrates it into the conservative themes of other Russian elites. He views twentieth-century history as the titanic ideological struggle among fascism, communism, and liber-

alism, culminating in the victory of Western liberalism. He argues, however, that liberalism, focused on individualism, technocracy, and globalism, has run its course and must be replaced with a neoconservative super-state (Russia) leading a multipolar world and achieving genuine justice, dignity, and freedom. At the same time, this ideological superpower will defend conservative values and tradition.

Dugin's theory demonstrates the evolving nature of Russian information warfare through its incorporation of social media tools. Russian observers noted how the color revolutions and the Arab Spring outflanked state-controlled media through the use of Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of social media. Dugin insists, therefore, that patriotic Russians must be organized and seize the domain of social media in service of the state. He prescribes a vigorous campaign of combating pro-Western liberalism through a set of polemics designed to vilify Russian liberals as lackeys for the Americans. If a blogger advocates for Western-style democracy, the patriotic Russian should respond, "How much did the CIA pay you?" Dugin insists that Russians must sustain the social media campaign relentlessly over a prolonged period to effectively paint the opposition as corrupt. Persistent messaging through social media not only conditions the domestic audience and targeted groups in areas of conflict, but it also gives rise to spontaneous support groups abroad—people who respond with enthusiasm to the Russian message and help to propagate it without direct control from the state. This technique is analogous to small boat swarms overwhelming capital ships at sea: the sheer volume and persistence of the messages overtaxes the adversary's ability to defend.[19]

The Gerasimov Model[20]

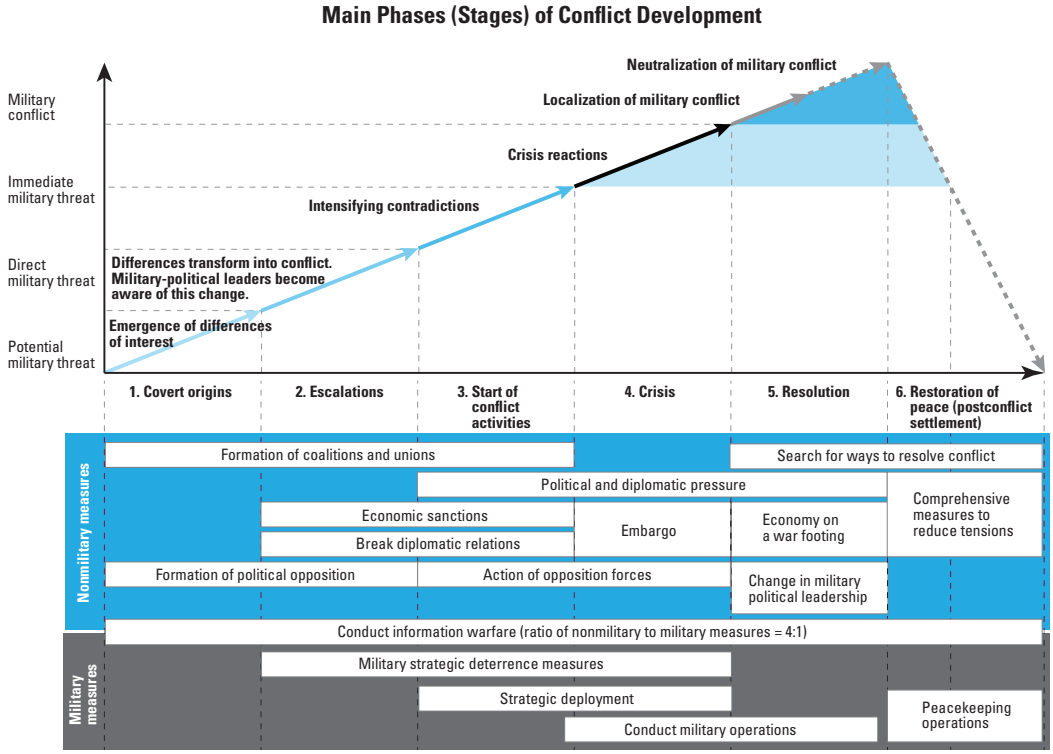
This study uses an analytical framework derived from the work of General Valery Gerasimov, chief of the general staff of the Russian Federation. General Gerasimov's main thesis is that modern conflict differs significantly from the paradigm of World War II and even from Cold War conflict. In place of declared wars, strict delineation of military and nonmilitary efforts, and large conventional forces fighting climactic battles, modern conflict instead features undeclared wars, hybrid operations combining military and nonmilitary activities, and smaller precision-based forces. Gerasimov, observing American and European experiences in the Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the intervention in Libya, notes that political, economic, cultural, and other nonmilitary factors play decisive roles. Indeed, even humanitarian operations should be considered part of an unconventional warfare campaign.

In a January 2013 report entitled "The Main Trends in the Forms and Methods of the Armed Forces" Gerasimov explained that the color revolutions and the Arab Spring demonstrated that the line between war and peace has blurred. While liberal democratic uprisings may not appear to constitute war, they often result in foreign intervention (both overt and clandestine), chaos, humanitarian disaster, and civil

war. These activities may become the "typical war" of the modern era, and Russian military practices must evolve to accommodate the new methods.

Modern war, Gerasimov argued, focuses on intelligence and domination of the information space. Information technologies have reduced the "spatial, temporal, and information gap between army and government." Objectives are achieved in a remote contactless war; strategic, operational, and tactical levels, as well as offensive and defensive actions, have become less distinguishable. Asymmetric action against enemy forces is more commonplace.

Gerasimov developed a model for modern Russian warfare under the title "The Role of Nonmilitary Methods in Interstate Conflict Resolution." His model envisions six stages of conflict development, each characterized by the primacy of nonmilitary measures but featuring increasing military involvement as the conflict approaches resolution.



The role of nonmilitary methods in interstate conflict resolution

1. Covert origins. During the initial stage, which will likely be protracted, political opposition forms against the opposing regime. This resistance takes the form of political parties, coalitions, and labor/trade unions. Russia employs strategic deterrence measures and conducts a broad, comprehensive, and sustained information warfare campaign to shape the environment toward a successful resolution. At this stage, the potential for military activity emerges.

2. Escalations. If the conflict escalates, Russia exerts political and diplomatic pressure on the offending regime or non-state actors. These activities can include economic sanctions or even the suspension of diplomatic relations to isolate the opponent. During this stage military and political leaders in the region and abroad become aware of the developing conflict and stake out their public positions.

3. Start of conflict activities. The third stage begins as opposing forces in the conflict region commence actions against one another. This can take the form of demonstrations, protests, subversion, sabotage, assassinations, and paramilitary engagements. Intensification of conflict activities begin to constitute a direct military threat to Russian interests and national security. At the commencement of this stage of conflict, Russia begins strategic deployment of its forces toward the conflict region.

4. Crisis. As the crisis comes to a head, Russia commences military operations, accompanied by strong diplomatic and economic suasion. The information campaign continues with a view to rendering the environment conducive to Russian intervention.

5. Resolution. During this stage Russian leadership searches for the best paths to resolve the conflict. The domestic economy is on a war footing, as a way to unify the nation's efforts toward successful prosecution of the war effort. A key aspect of resolution is effecting a change in the military and political leadership of the conflict region or state—what Western militaries refer to as "regime change." The goal is to reset the political, military, economic, and social reality in the region in such a way as to facilitate a return to peace, order, and the resumption of routine relations.

6. Restoration of peace. During the final stage, which again may be protracted, Russia oversees comprehensive measures to reduce tensions and conducts peacekeeping operations. This stage includes the diplomatic and political measures required to establish a postconflict settlement that addresses the original causes of conflict.

Gerasimov's model for modern conflict is a theoretical adaptation of emerging ideas about warfare, but elements of these ideas clearly pertain to Russia's unconventional warfare in Ukraine and Crimea in 2013–2014. Part II of this paper uses the model and Russia's information warfare theories to analyze the intervention.

Part II. The Russian Unconventional Warfare Campaign in Ukraine, 2013–2014

Historical and Political Context

The dominant theme of Ukraine's history is foreign rule punctuated by movements for cultural and political independence. Sharing ethnic and cultural roots with Russia in the Kievan Rus', Ukraine has been dominated by Poland to the west and the Russian Empire to the east since the Middle Ages. In 1654, Cossack hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky signed the Treaty of Pereyaslav allying the Cossack people of Ukraine and the Russian Empire against Poland. But in 1704 another Cossack hetman, Ivan Mazepa, threw in his lot with Charles XII of Sweden against the tsar. Centuries later, these two figures elicit both praise and condemnation from Ukrainian nationalists on the one hand and the pro-Russian population on the other. Mazepa's image decorates the Ukrainian ten-hryvnia note, but in Kyiv a street named in his honor was renamed under Viktor Yanukovych's administration, and Mazepa remains anathematized by the Russian Orthodox Church. Russian and Soviet narratives point to the Treaty of Pereyaslav to illustrate the perpetual union of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples.[21]

Ukrainian ten-hryvnia note featuring Ivan Mazepa

Stepan Bandera

Ukraine's experience under Soviet control was not a happy one. Soviet efforts to impose collectivized agriculture in the late 1920s generated a famine (the Holodomor, 1932–1933) that killed millions in Ukraine. During Stalin's Great Terror (1937–1938), Ukraine's bid for cultural independence led to a brutal crackdown. Simmering nationalist aspirations and a growing hatred of the Soviets found expres-

sion in the person of Stepan Bandera during World War II. Bandera worked with the Nazi regime to separate Ukraine from the Soviet Union and then fought against the advancing Red Army late in the war. KGB agents assassinated him in 1959, and he became an infamous figure in Russia's vilification of pro-Western sentiments—a caricature of what Moscow labels fascist influence.

Map of Ukraine

Ukraine's borders stabilized as the territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) was expanded at the end of World War II to encompass territories taken from Poland and Romania. The makeup of Ukraine's population also shifted dramatically after World War II as millions of Russians moved into Ukraine to rebuild and industrialize the region, a process that shaped the region into the economic engine of the USSR. Propaganda stressed the unity of Ukraine and Russia on the basis of centuries of claimed historical precedent. In 1954, during a celebration of the Treaty of Pereyaslav, Russian premier Nikita Khrushchev transferred the Russian-majority Crimean peninsula to the Ukrainian SSR, certain that Kyiv and Moscow would be perpetually bound together. Recent Russian propaganda points to the artificial nature of Ukraine's borders and decries the mixture of West-leaning populations with pro-Russian eastern Slavs.[22]

Anti-Soviet and Ukrainian nationalist activism continued despite repeated Russification efforts, escalating when the Chernobyl nuclear plant exploded in 1986. The disaster killed thirty-one workers and caused widespread contamination that extended the death toll from radiation-related sickness over ensuing years. Outrage over government duplicity in the wake of the accident, and the rapid collapse of the Soviet system as the Cold War ended, led to a vote for independence from the USSR on December 1, 1991. Despite achieving independence, Ukraine fell victim to political and economic corruption under president Leonid Kuchma (1994–2004).

Competing factions of wealthy oligarchs, public officials, and organized crime led to a decade of scandals, political murders, and election irregularities. Ukrainian leadership and business interests sought to maintain cordial relations with Russia while simultaneously expanding economic ties and integration with Western Europe. Russia viewed the prospect of integration with the West as a threat to its sphere of influence and sought to compel Ukraine's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) instead. Moscow also pressed for continued basing rights in Sevastopol, home to the Russian Black Sea Fleet.

Chernobyl reactor 4

Government incompetence, corruption, and kowtowing to Russia stirred both Ukrainian nationalism and a growing affinity for the liberalism and capitalism of Western Europe. The bitterly contested 2004 presidential election between former prime ministers Viktor Yanukovych and Viktor Yushchenko led to an unforeseen popular movement that became known as the Orange Revolution. During the campaign, Yushchenko became seriously ill, leading to suspicion that he had been poisoned with dioxin at the behest of Russia. Mass demonstrations, civil disobedience, and strikes led to a court-mandated recount and the election of pro-Western candidate Yushchenko. Russia rankled under the threat of losing more of its East European buffer states to the EU and NATO.[23]

The Orange Revolution

The new administration, led by prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko, brought hopes of political and economic reform, but political corruption and infighting led to the dissolution of the Orange coalition and the dissipation of popular idealism. Kyiv's attempts to move toward closer alignment with the EU, World Trade Organization (WTO), and potential NATO membership gave rise to a sustained national debate over the question of alignment with Western Europe or Russia. Trade and gas disputes with Russia soured public opinion of the government. Cultural relations likewise deteriorated as President Yushchenko enacted symbolic measures that many in Russia and Russian speakers in Ukraine considered "anti-Russian," including recognition of the Holodomor as genocide and official hero status for Ukrainian nationalists who fought the Red Army during World War II.[24]

Viktor Yanukovych was elected president of Ukraine in February 2010 in a narrow victory over Yulia Tymoshenko, and he shaped a majority government of mostly ethnic Russian parties with power bases in eastern Ukraine.[25]

Political Framework Leading up to Euromaidan

In describing the political context of Russia's intervention in Ukraine it is tempting to reduce the complexities into a bipolarity of pro-Russian and pro-Western blocs. The twin histories of Bohdan Khmelnytsky (the famous Cossack signer of the Treaty of Pereyaslav with Russia) and Ivan Mazepa (who joined with Sweden against the Russian tsar) can, at a superficial level, suggest this basic duality in Ukrainian politics. But closer examination of Khmelnytsky's life and times reveals the causes of his famed devotion to Mother Russia—specifically, his antipathy toward the Polish regime that had deprived him of his property. (His family's estate had been seized by a Polish magnate, and the king refused to intervene.) His motivations and those of his followers in seeking alliance with Russia transcended merely personal considerations, but the fact remained that the Cossacks who looked to Khmelnytsky for leadership perceived that such a connection would best protect their own interests, freedoms, and prerogatives. Indeed, before finally turning to Russia for protection, the Cossack hetman flirted with the Ottoman sultan and contemplated a union with a Muslim power. But in the end he grudgingly looked to the Russian tsar and signed the Treaty of Pereyaslav not because ideology or religion dictated his actions but because he saw it as the best guarantor of Cossack and Ukrainian sovereignty. The resulting relationship was troubled from the start.

Likewise, the seemingly ideological opposite pole—Ivan Mazepa—is viewed by Russians and Ukrainians alike as a symbol of Ukraine's defiance of Moscow and dogged determination to be free of Russia's domination. But again the details reveal nuances that spoil the simplistic model. Mazepa was, like Khmelnytsky before him, a pow-

erful Cossack hetman. He came to power during his colorful career as an ally of the tsar. But Russia's struggles against the Swedish–Polish alliance left Mazepa worried that the tsar's generals intended to employ the Cossacks as cannon fodder in far-off battles and leave his own lands vulnerable to enemy incursions from the West. In 1708 matters came to a head, and Mazepa made the fateful decision to betray the tsar and ally with the Poles and Swedes. The Battle of Poltava the following year doomed Mazepa's new alliance, and he died in exile. His legacy thereafter was booted about like a football: pro-Russian and pro-Soviet sources despised him, while Ukrainians tired of Russian domination hailed him as a nationalistic freedom fighter.

Khmelnytsky and Mazepa, although posthumously bearing the burden of opposite political ideologies, were very much cut from the same cloth of Cossack nationalism and self-interest. Likewise, on the surface modern Ukrainian politics can appear to be polarized between pro-Western and pro-Russian extremes, but the panoply of factions and parties are in reality more complex in their motivations and objectives. Like the famous Cossack leaders before them, modern Ukrainian political leaders also have in common a fundamental desire to carve out, protect, and sustain a Ukrainian identity. The realities of the modern world force each party to look westward or eastward as they search for better ways to guarantee their hoped-for futures.

The Rada featured intense political conflict in the months leading up to Euromaidan.[a] Viktor Yanukovych attained the presidency in 2010, and soon after his associate Mykola Azarov formed a government as the new prime minister. By this time, the Party of Regions had gained considerable strength throughout the country, including in municipalities, except in western Ukraine. The Party of Regions, originally created in 1997, represented ethnic Russians as well as others in the country who favored ties to Russia. In 2012 the Party of Regions gained strength through a merger with Strong Ukraine, a political party that coalesced around billionaires Serhiy Tihipko and Oleksandr Kardakov. Despite Yanukovych's inclination toward Moscow, the Party of Regions's foreign policy reflected both the East–West tug-of-war and the more nuanced objective of finding a balance that would promote Ukrainian interests. Thus, the party was open to stronger economic ties with the EU and even agreed to commit troops to the US-led War on Terror but deprecated full

Viktor Yanukovych

[a] Euromaidan was a spontaneous uprising in late 2013 in reaction to President Viktor Yanukovych's decision to abandon growing ties to the EU in favor of stronger links with Moscow.

integration into NATO. In his initial foreign policy statements in 2010, the new president expressed his vision for Ukraine as a neutral state cooperating in matters of defense with both NATO and Russia.

Under Yanukovych's leadership, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine overturned the 2004 amendments, considering them unconstitutional on October 1, 2010. The subject amendments had significantly reduced the power of the executive branch in favor of the Rada. Yanukovych's move was widely perceived among the opposition as a power grab.

Opposition parties included the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform (UDAR), led by heavyweight boxer Vitali Klitschko; Fatherland, led by former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko; and Svoboda ("Freedom"), led by Oleh Tyahnybok.

The UDAR party was center-right and espoused nationalism and opposition to Russian pressure and involvement in Ukraine. Its power base was in Kyiv. It had strong links to the Social Democratic Party in Germany, and Angela Merkel lent her support for Vitali Klitschko as an effective counterweight to Russian influence. Klitschko was elected mayor of Kyiv in 2014 and was thereby required to give up official leadership of UDAR. He supported Petro Poroshenko's bid for the presidency. UDAR tended to avoid polarizing political stances and instead focused on achieving social justice, cutting corruption, and reining in perquisites for government (and former government) officials.

The Fatherland party underwent a complex series of mergers and splits after its founding in the late 1990s, but in general it inclined toward European integration and Ukrainian nationalism. In 2013 Tymoshenko proposed a party ideological manifesto that spelled out her thinking on key political issues. The manifesto called for eventual full integration into the EU and declared Fatherland as an associate member of the European People's Party (EPP), a multinational center-right political party in the European Parliament. Tymoshenko went on to insist that Ukrainian should be the sole official language of the country, that the Holodomor was an act of genocide, and that any infringement of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty be resisted immediately and with strength.

Svoboda was originally founded as the Social-National Party of Ukraine, a rightist party that espoused nationalism and anti-communism. Its original power base was Lviv, and early constituents included veterans of the Soviet–Afghan War. Its iconography and far-right policy stances led opponents to label the party as fascist. The party established a paramilitary called Patriot of Ukraine that sought to support the country's military forces. By 2007 Svoboda severed official links with the paramilitary, but they remain informally connected. Oleh Tyahnybok took over leadership of the party in 2004 and became a moderating influence. He pushed far-right members out of the party and changed the party's symbol to a picture of

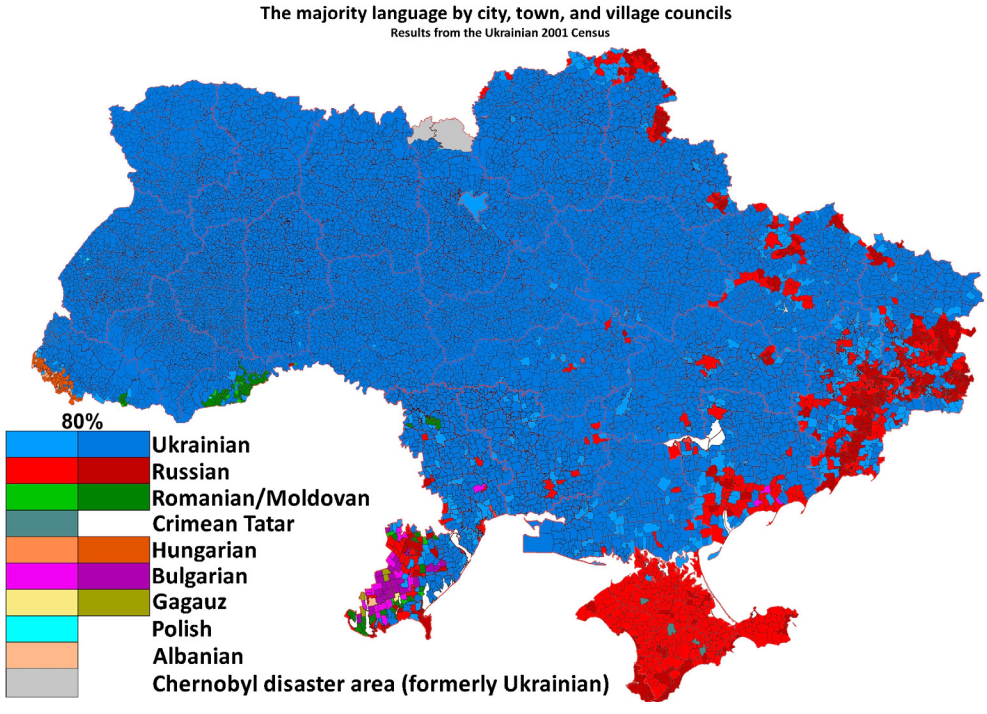
a hand holding up three fingers, reminiscent of freedom movements in the 1980s. But Tyahnybok also made public speeches in which he denigrated various groups, including Jews, calling them "scum," which attracted a lot of criticism. The party continued to attract followers among the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and other nationalists. In one infamous episode in 2013, Svoboda deputies shouted during a Party of Regions speech in the Rada in which Oleksandr Yefremov was speaking Russian. The delegates shouted "Speak Ukrainian," to which the Party of Regions members responded with cries of "fascists!" against Svoboda. A fistfight ensued. Svoboda vehemently opposed the Russian annexation of Crimea and formed a paramilitary called the Sich Battalion to fight in eastern Ukraine.

As Viktor Yanukovych sought to consolidate his power, the government brought criminal charges against Yulia Tymoshenko for abuse of power and embezzlement, eventually obtaining a conviction. She was sentenced to seven years imprisonment, but the proceeding was widely viewed as a political ploy to rid the president of his strongest opponent. The United States and the EU condemned the actions, with the latter insisting that Tymoshenko's release would be a condition for Ukraine's membership in the EU.

Yanukovych sought to balance growing popularity for closer relations with the EU on the one hand with the very real pressure he felt from Moscow and his ethnic Russian constituency on the other hand. He sought to negotiate a more advantageous natural gas deal with Russia, and to that end he signed an agreement extending Russia's lease of Ukraine's Black Sea port facilities, including Sevastopol, in 2010. The deal split the nation's political spectrum into two camps—one championing closer ties to Moscow and the other touting nationalism and independence from Russian domination. Many in Ukraine viewed the continued presence of the Russian fleet in Sevastopol as an affront to Ukrainian sovereignty. But Yanukovych tried to sell the deal as an essential part of his strategy to further Ukrainian integration with Europe. He argued that to sustain loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and to meet EU standards, the government had to keep expenditures under control. Measures in this direction included highly unpopular cuts in pensions and other social spending, but Yanukovych pointed to reduced natural gas prices as contributing to government savings.

One of the most poignant symbols of the struggle for a rational and effective foreign policy is the ongoing dispute regarding how to interpret the Holodomor—the 1930s famine that Stalin's Russia inflicted on Ukraine, killing nearly ten million. Parties and people seeking to distance themselves from Moscow's control label the incident as genocide and place the blame on the country of Russia. Those more inclined toward friendly relations with Russia (including Yanukovych) instead seek a middle ground of condemning the forced food expropriations but blaming Stalin's totalitarian government rather than Russia itself. They are quick to point out that the resulting famine killed many in Russia as well.

Yanukovych also sought to promote the Russian language as one of Ukraine's official tongues. He pointed to problems within schools, courts, and other civil institutions, and he sponsored a law (passed in 2012) that allowed for any language spoken by at least 10 percent of the population to be declared official within that local area. The law was later repealed after Yanukovych's ouster, because it was seen as an attempt to further Russify Ukraine.



Languages in Ukraine

In early 2013 opposition parties, including UDAR, Fatherland, and others, blocked access to the podium in an attempt to protest the direction of the government's policies and the practice in which party deputies could vote for absent members of the parliament. Throughout the year the opposition parties pushed back against Yanukovych's attempted austerity measures, which he sponsored in the name of obtaining better integration into the EU. Indeed, the president proclaimed his intention to sign the Association Agreement in November and pushed parliament to join together to pass the needed legislation to make it a reality.

With rising antipathy threatening his regime, Yanukovych signaled his willingness to formalize integration with the EU. But in November 2013, he bowed to economic and diplomatic pressure from Moscow and shocked the West by reversing his decision and declaring his intent to instead deepen relations with Russia. The move was met with an outcry from the opposition and pro-EU demonstrations in

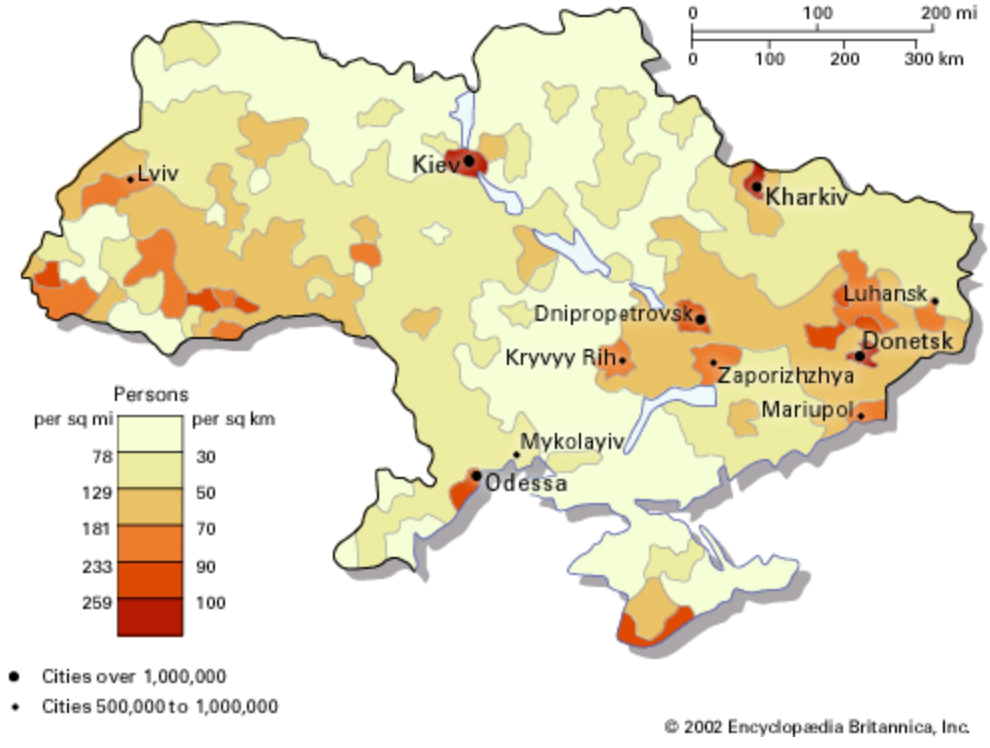
Kyiv's Independence Square (the Maidan Nezalezhnosti). Protests were initially nonviolent, and in response to government crackdowns the protests surged to hundreds of thousands of people in Kyiv and spread throughout the country. The new pro-Western movement was called Euromaidan.[26]

Euromaidan

President Yanukovych and Russian president Vladimir Putin moved quickly in an attempt to calm the opposition. They signed the Ukrainian-Russian Action Plan treaty, which discounted Ukraine's natural gas purchases by a third and provided that Russia would buy $15 billion in Ukrainian government bonds to alleviate the debt crisis. The treaty was met with a blockade of demonstrators hoping to prevent its ratification. The number of demonstrators dwindled after New Year's Eve during the Orthodox Christmas season, but protests suddenly reignited on January 12 after police injured an opposition leader while he was protesting the convictions of several Ukrainian nationalists. Court and legislative actions banning protests continued to escalate the crisis, giving rise to riots and demonstrations in the hundreds of thousands, with protesters demanding that Yanukovych resign. The passage of a series of laws on January 16—which the opposition referred to as the Laws of Dictatorship—swelled the ranks of the protesters, including the violent Pravy Sektor.[b] The interior minister authorized police forces to use physical force

[b] Pravy Sektor was a far-right Ukrainian nationalist group that emerged as a paramilitary during the November 2013 protests. It became a political party in March 2014.

and firearms to quell rioters, which caused hundreds of injuries and several deaths. In response to the effectiveness and energy of the Automaidan movement, the government outlawed more than five cars driving together. Amid all these efforts to intimidate the demonstrators, cries for the ouster of Yanukovych grew stronger.



Population density of Ukraine

The violence in Kyiv spread across the country in early February. Protesters occupied regional government buildings and the Justice Ministry in defiance of the anti-protest laws, spurring more police actions. President Yanukovych tried to negotiate with the opposition, offering to repeal the anti-protest laws, remove Prime Minister Azarov, grant amnesty for arrested protesters, and return to the limits on presidential power codified in the 2004 constitution. Negotiations broke down in February, and violence erupted, resulting in at least sixty-seven deaths between February 18 and 20. The president and numerous Party of Regions deputies fled the capital, and the parliament voted to remove President Yanukovych from office (Yanukovych then fled to eastern Ukraine before exile in Russia). The interim authorities released Yulia Tymoshenko from prison on February 22. Oleksandr Turchynov became interim president and Arseniy Yatsenyuk became prime minister.

The parliament set presidential elections for May 25, 2014, and the pro-Western voters chose billionaire oligarch Petro Poroshenko as the new president of Ukraine. Reflecting the sentiments of his constituents, he signed the Association Agreement

with the EU on June 27, 2014. The pro-Russian resistance opposed the new government, considered it illegal, and insisted it was a fascist regime.

The locus of conflict shifted to Crimea, where a largely Russian-speaking majority allegedly favored deeper ties with Moscow. After the expulsion of Yanukovych, Sergei Aksyonov, leader of a large paramilitary force in Crimea, appealed to Putin for help. Popular support for ethnic Russians and Russian speakers in Crimea emboldened Putin to act. Pro-Russian protesters labeled the Kyiv government as Western fascists and adopted a position that ethnic Russians in Ukraine were in danger. Groups of unidentified armed men began appearing throughout the region, often in coordination with local pro-Russian militias. Both the Ukrainian government and most Western intelligence sources claimed that the "little green men" were Russian operatives. The Crimean "self-defense" militias seized government buildings, air bases, and military installations, and the Kyiv government, desiring to avoid bloodshed and further provocation, ordered its military forces not to resist. On March 11, 2014, a joint resolution between Sevastopol and the Supreme Council of Crimea declared their intention to hold a referendum to join Russia. Refat Chubarov, president of the Worldwide Congress of Crimean Tatars, announced that the new Crimean government and the proposed referendum were illegitimate and supported only by the armed forces from another country. On March 18, 2014, a treaty was signed to incorporate all of Crimea, including Sevastopol, into the Russian Federation.

Sergei Aksyonov

The United States and EU responded to the move with economic sanctions and small-scale military deployments to the Baltic states and Poland. Diplomatic protests continued, but Russia's annexation appeared to succeed as the world turned its attention to eastern Ukraine.

Demonstrators in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts engaged in sporadic violence in the wake of Yanukovych's ouster, but Russia's annexation of Crimea stimulated a new wave of demonstrations in April. The SBU (Security Service of Ukraine) had ejected demonstrators who seized the Donetsk Regional State Administration building in early March. But in April more than a thousand demonstrators again seized the building and demanded a regional referendum similar to the one in Crimea. When the government refused, the rebels declared the People's Republic of Donetsk. That month, pro-Russian militants stormed government offices in Donetsk,

Denis Pushilin

Luhansk, and Kharkiv. Resistance groups labeled the Kyiv government as fascist and held informal referendums on autonomy in the east. Denis Pushilin, one of the leaders of the self-styled People's Republic of Donetsk, stated that his forces would not consider withdrawal until the new leaders in Kyiv left power.

In mid-April the Kyiv government launched its counterattack against rebels in the east. The offensive quickly stalled, with scattered reports of Ukrainian soldiers refusing to fire on their fellow citizens and in some cases changing sides. Other Ukrainian forces simply lacked the combat power to overcome the Russian-backed resistance. In late April government forces launched a second round of attacks with some success in Mariupol and to the northeast of Donetsk. To deal with firmly entrenched rebel fighters in Slovyansk and Donetsk, government forces resorted to blockades aimed at isolating the defenders. But with Russian troops, intelligence personnel, and equipment, the rebels continued to seize buildings and hold their positions throughout the Donbass region. The combatants became increasingly brutal, and allegations of torture inflamed passions on both sides. In late April, Vyacheslav Ponomaryov, the pro-Russian mayor of Slovyansk, threatened to kill hostages, including an American journalist, if his forces were attacked.

On May 22, rebels from the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts declared the establishment of New Russia, an area including southern and eastern Ukraine. The militants mandated that Russian Orthodoxy was the state religion and that private industries would be nationalized. Late spring and early summer saw an increase in the pace of skirmishing, but actions remained relatively small in scale with few casualties on either side. The presence of Russian-made antiaircraft weapons neutralized the Ukrainian government's air advantage and resulted in the downing of an Ilyushin Il-76 transport in mid-June, killing forty-nine troops who were aboard.

Militants continued to expand their footprint in eastern Ukraine until the government counterattack began to gain some momentum. On July 1, after a weeklong unilateral cease-fire, the government counteroffensive resumed and rapidly recaptured several towns, including Slovyansk on July 5. The renewed government attacks inflicted heavy losses on the pro-Russian militants, and some insurgents fled. Fighting intensified through mid-July, with government forces capturing more towns and gradually pushing the remaining militants into their strongholds of Donetsk and

Luhansk. On July 17, Russian-backed militia in eastern Ukraine fired a surface-to-air missile at Malaysian Airlines Flight 17, causing it to crash, killing 283 passengers and 15 crew members. The downing of the civilian passenger flight brought increased world attention on Russian activities, and strengthened economic sanctions may have contributed to a lessening of direct Russian support. In any case government forces began to threaten the remaining rebel strongholds. By early August, the government had recaptured about 75 percent of the territory once held by insurgents.

In September 2014, a tenuous cease-fire was arranged between Ukraine and pro-Russian forces, with the support of Russia and the EU. Sporadic fighting continued, but both sides claimed that the cease-fire would continue to be respected. However, by early November there were clear indications that the fighting was heating up. Russian tanks crossed the border, and on November 12, media outlets were reporting that the cease-fire was over and that major hostilities had resumed. The use of conventional invasion can be viewed from two perspectives. On the one hand it represents the failure of Russian information warfare in eastern Ukraine, because it implies Putin's desperation in recouping the failures of his agents there. On the other hand, it represents the logical, culminating sequel in the Russian information campaign, which in part is designed to set the conditions for invasion if necessary.

The government of Ukraine under President Poroshenko sought to secure the nation's sovereignty by calling on both the West and Moscow to respect the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, which guaranteed Ukraine's security and territorial integrity in exchange for Kyiv relinquishing its nuclear arsenal. Poroshenko also flirted with requesting Major Non-NATO Ally status—a move sure to inflame Putin.

Russian Intervention in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine

The Players

According to Russian polemics championing the annexation of Crimea and Russian involvement in eastern Ukraine, the entire operation was planned, organized, and controlled under the leadership of Vladimir Putin. It is significant that pundits in favor of Russia's actions—and not just those opposed to Russia—point to the cult of personality that has gathered around Putin. Indeed, it is striking that despite all the modern and postmodern features of Russian information warfare, the age-old glorification of a strongman continues to characterize Moscow's politics. The current generation of Russian military and civilian leadership includes a large number of *siloviki*—Russian leaders with backgrounds in the intelligence or military services. The *siloviki* represent themselves as resolute, honest, apolitical patriots—strong

bulwarks against the chaos of liberalism. Most major governmental figures with influence in Russia are close associates of Putin's, and many share earlier experiences in the KGB.[27]

Minister of Defense Sergey Shoygu was reportedly appointed to his position because he was politically neutral, and Putin wanted to avoid strengthening the "St. Petersburg Group" of *siloviki*. Of the military officials involved in the campaigns in Ukraine, the most notable is general Valery Gerasimov, who outlined Russia's new methods of warfare, highlighting the nonmilitary factors as the most decisive.[28]

Key to understanding Russia's foreign policy is understanding the role of the oligarchs—the super-rich Russian businessmen who are close to Putin. Although they are not a monolithic group, they generally have deep investments in energy and finance, and they champion the EEU. They share neoconservative values. Some tout their devotion to Russian Orthodoxy and by so doing attract some favorable attention from religious figures in the West. But the oligarchs remain Russian

The oligarchs

1. Igor Sechin, former Soviet agent and arms smuggler and currently Rosneft CEO and adviser to Putin; 2. Yuri Kovalchuk, "Putin's banker" and largest shareholder in Bank Rossiya; 3. Arkady and Boris Rotenberg, co-owners of SGM who control InvestCaptital Bank and SMP Bank; 4. Gennady Timchenko, oil trader, founder of Gunvor and Volga Group, and close associate of Putin; 5. Konstantin Malofeev, lawyer and investment banker who backs illegal paramilitary in Ukraine; 6. Sergei Chemezov, engineer and former KGB agent, Rosneft director, and director general of Rostec.

nationalists above all else. They see the unification and success of ethnic Russians (and eastern Slavs in general) as the key to achieving Putin's vision of a multipolar world to counterbalance America's overweening domination. Western sanctions targeted the oligarchs because they are viewed as both influential with Putin and vulnerable to economic and financial pressure.[29]

The class of the super-rich business elites grew in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of Boris Yeltsin. In the name of privatization, Russian business interests (and the political clout that attended them) were sold off to a new class of leaders. These leaders in turn sought to solidify their control of Russian politics and foreign policy by cultivating a pliant politician. They sponsored the rise of Vladimir Putin but soon discovered that the former KGB agent was anything but their puppet. Instead, Putin jailed oligarchs that defied him and instructed the business elite that he would foster their economic and financial interests if they kept clear of political interference and remained loyal to his regime. Within a few short

Russian leadership

1. Vladimir Putin, former KGB agent and current president of Russia; 2. Dmitry Medvedev, former law professor and president, now prime minister of Russia; 3. Sergey Lavrov, foreign minister of Russia; 4. Sergey Shoygu, minister of defense—seen as apolitical and chosen in place of "St. Petersburg Group" candidate; 5. Valery Gerasimov, chief of the general staff of the Armed Forces of Russia and proponent of "new-generation warfare"; 6. Alexandr Galkin, commander, Southern Military District.

years Putin consolidated his control over the key oligarchs, and they became the third pillar, along with the government and security services, of the Russian political infrastructure. In the current environment, elites are given positions at the head of corporations or in government, which are viewed as interchangeable.

Putin's inner circle includes a number of these oligarchs, including Igor Sechin, who was given control of the giant oil corporation Rosneft; Vladimir Yakutin, who controls the country's rail network; Dmitry Medvedev, who became, alternately, prime minister and president; Arkady and Boris Rotenberg, co-owners of huge financial institutions; and Yuri Kovalchuk, known as "Putin's banker." Most members of the inner circle are Leningrad men with long associations with Putin. Tikhon Shevkunov, a Russian Orthodox priest said to be Putin's confessor, is another close confidant. Shevkunov directed and starred in a popular documentary on the history of the fall of the Byzantine Empire—a thinly veiled propagandist piece designed to help craft the message that a strong empire can be sapped by foreign intrigue and internal weakness. Over the years the Orthodox Church has influenced Putin toward nationalism and conservatism with its theme of Christian order. Putin's chief of staff, Sergei Ivanov, is a foreign policy hawk and likewise a close adviser to the president. Vladislav Surkov, of part Russian and part Chechen ancestry, is the chief ideologue of the Putin regime's "sovereign democracy" theme and is one of the leaders of the national youth movement Nashi (Ours), which targets anyone deemed anti-Russian.

The Motivations

Russia's intervention into Ukraine and its annexation of Crimea in 2014 stem from a combination of motivations, fears, and interests that drew strength from the period of *pozor* (shame) in the early 1990s. The historical and cultural experience of imperial Russia, with its control of massive swaths of territory across Asia and Europe, combined with the pragmatic concerns over the strategic security of the Russian Federation. Tangential to this is the feeling of victimization associated with the radical shift in Moscow's global influence—from feared superpower to minor regional power—highlighted by the West's seemingly unstoppable encroachment into Russia's historical sphere of influence. Finally, there is the pervasive influence of domestic politics and Putin's paranoia over maintaining his regime.

The strategic factors that led to Russian aggression in Ukraine included domestic politics, reaction to the expansion of the EU and NATO, the strategic value of the Black Sea, Russia's need to maintain influence in peripheral states as a buffer against Western invasion, and President Putin's desire to strengthen the new EEU in the former Soviet sphere of influence. Each of these factors contributed to Moscow's mandate for intervention under the umbrella imperative to reclaim Russia's status as a superpower. These factors underlie Russia's foreign policy, but Moscow also touts its aim to foster and protect ethnic Russians and Russian speakers who are threatened by American-inspired fascist regimes in the former Soviet states.[30]

Domestic Political Stability and Incentives

Russian operations in Crimea and eastern Ukraine helped to remedy domestic political threats to the Putin regime. The reversion to autocracy in the Russian political system has affected both domestic and foreign policies. The inherent instability associated with strong centralized rule fosters a traditional Russian view of domestic reformers as a perpetual fifth column serving foreign interests. This insecurity is exacerbated by President Putin's struggle to maintain Russia as a superpower. Russia views as threats any movements within peripheral states toward integration with Europe, and Putin continues to raise the specter of encroachment from the West as a pretext to justify a unitary, autocratic state and neoimperialist policies as a necessity for national security.

The deterioration of economic and sociopolitical life in Russia between 2009 and 2012 sparked backlash from the urban middle class. Massive demonstrations in Moscow and St. Petersburg emerged in late 2011 and continued through 2012 with protesters demanding freedoms and decrying corruption. Opposition leaders (e.g., Alexei Navalny) became icons, and Putin's approval ratings began to decline. This political threat led Putin to make a strategic shift to right-wing policies to garner support from the "other Russia," presenting Putin as a bulwark of traditional Russian values.

Ukraine is central to the original narrative of the Russian nation and Eastern Orthodox civilization, and losing influence in Ukraine and Crimea would threaten Putin's political appeal among the demographics of the other Russia. The tidal shift against Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych and the Russian dominance of Kyiv's politics expressed in Euromaidan constituted a serious blow to Putin's image as a defender against the eastward drive of Western influence. The annexation of Crimea and continued operations in eastern Ukraine have served to quell a potential domestic crisis of legitimacy for the Putin administration.

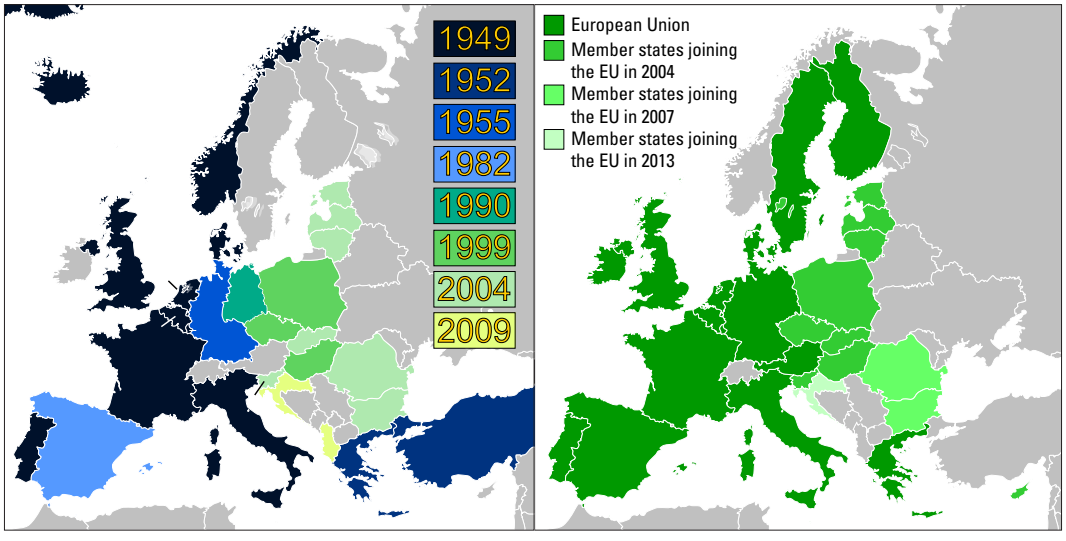
Russian actions in Crimea also served to warn those within Russia who may be inspired to imitate Euromaidan or start uprisings in the North Caucasus. Russia's recent military buildup and increased security funding have been particularly focused on improving domestic security, including new bases in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan to enable rapid movement of forces to hot spots (a strategic imperative frequently rehearsed since 2004).

Counter Eastward Progression of Western Economic and Security Institutions

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the chaos of the Yeltsin era, political elites under Vladimir Putin reached a consensus to reestablish Russia as a great power. President Putin's outlook on the West hardened after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine (2004–2005) and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan (2005). These

popular movements coincided with eastward expansion by the EU and NATO, and together they were perceived as a US-led conspiracy to further the reach of Western economic and security alliances Eastward to undermine Putin's regime and regional influence.

The Westward orientation of former Soviet republics poses economic and geopolitical risks to Russia's drive for renewed status as a great power. Acceptance of Western institutions and values may encourage popular movements within Russia and embolden insurgents in the North Caucasus. Moscow does not view central European countries as merely adopting Western institutions and mores but (in President Putin's words) as an aggressive and forceful progression eastward of "the infrastructure of a military bloc . . . toward [Russia's] borders." Putin's April 2014 statement continued, saying "our decision on Crimea was partly due to . . . considerations that if we do nothing, then at some point, guided by the same principles, NATO will drag Ukraine in and they will say: 'It doesn't have anything to do with you.' "



History of NATO enlargement

Geostrategic Control of the Black Sea Region

Russia's long-standing maritime and security interests in the Black Sea highlight the importance of Crimea and the port of Sevastopol. The peninsula served as a barrier against invasion from Western powers, including Ottoman, French, and British forces in the Crimean War (1853–1856), and hosted some of the bloodiest engagements on the Eastern Front during the German invasion in World War II. Russian expansion into the Black Sea basin in the seventeenth century was driven by both imperial ambitions and hopes to open significant maritime trade routes. Today, the Black Sea provides Russia with a crucial avenue to advance, demonstrate,

and safeguard its superpower status. Black Sea access allows Russia to address maritime security threats to its coastal waters and energy transportation routes, as well as to project power into the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and beyond.

As the largest economic player in Crimea, the Black Sea Fleet also offers nonmilitary Russian influence. It owns more than eighteen thousand hectares of land, only three thousand of which are in Sevastopol. The fleet and its affiliates own high-value assets, including resorts, real estate, and profitable businesses, many of which operate outside of Ukrainian tax regimes and significantly below market rates. These nonmilitary activities integrate the Black Sea Fleet and affiliates into regional politics, business, and crime.[31]

> *War furnishes the best opportunities to distract domestic public opinion and destroy the remnants of the political and intellectual opposition within Russia itself. An undemocratic regime worried about the prospect of domestic economic social and political crises—such as those that now haunt Russia amid recession and falling oil prices—is likely to be pondering further acts of aggression.*
>
> *—Andrei Illarionov (former economic adviser to Vladimir Putin)*

Maintain Buffer of Russian Influence in Peripheral States against the West

Russia has historically maintained a ring of nations within its sphere of influence to compensate for its lack of geographic barriers to invasion. The policy of maintaining a buffer zone of friendly states was most explicitly expressed by Joseph Stalin after the devastation of World War II, a policy meant to ensure that Russia could never again be invaded by a Western force. The accession of the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) and Poland into the EU and NATO marked a critical breakdown in the traditional security zone maintained by both the Russian Empire and the USSR. The persistent orientation of Georgia toward EU and NATO membership despite the 2008 Russo–Georgian War and the decisive steps toward an Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU were premonitions of a collapsing Eastern European buffer of friendly or vassal states, which would leave the Russian mainland vulnerable to Western influence and military action.

Strengthen EEU in the Former Soviet Sphere of Influence

Losing Russian security and economic influence in central Europe jeopardizes Putin's geopolitical aspirations for the Russian state, and Ukraine's westward shift through Euromaidan constitutes a devastating blow. Historically, Ukraine's industry and agriculture were the most vital economic factors in maintaining the power and

influence of the Soviet Union. Today, Putin's failure to compel Ukrainian membership in the EEU has rendered the organization largely impotent, echoing failed Russian attempts to establish a CIS in the early 1990s. Additionally, Ukrainian integration into the EU will restrict Russian access to Ukrainian markets and jobs, undermining Russia's stalled economy and inflaming domestic issues that threaten the current regime.

Incorporate Ethnic Russians

Russia's compatriot policy has long been a means of bolstering Russian soft power in post-Soviet states and has been used on several occasions to justify military intervention in neighboring regions (most notably in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014). Protection of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers is alternately a genuine motivation and an artificial contrivance for justifying intervention. Russian policy initially defined a compatriot as "any citizen of the former Soviet Union, even if he or she, or their forebears never lived in the [Russian Federation]." The definition of compatriot was broadened through several legal revisions to include any ethnic Russian outside of Russia who successfully applies for a Russian passport. The stated objective of these policies is the promotion of Russian culture and Russian language.

The persistent Russian demographic crisis, characterized by a low birth rate and high death rate that continue to keep the population growth rate near zero (–0.03 percent), is a factor influencing Russian compatriot policies. In his 2012 presidential campaign, then-Prime Minister Putin ran on an "effective complex people-saving strategy" to increase Russia's population from 142.5 million to 154 million in an effort to successfully confront the existential "risk of turning into an 'empty space' whose fate will not be decided by us." The ethnic Russian population in Russia is shrinking while Muslim populations continue to grow, suggesting the demographic landscape could change to majority Muslim by 2050. Combined with widely held pan-Russian nationalism that decries the division of Russian populations into former Soviet republics, the prospect of reunifying Russian diaspora is popular across the Russian political spectrum. Thus, the prospect of injecting 1.45 million ethnic Russians into the population by annexing Crimea became attractive.

Russian Order of Battle

To prosecute their campaign in Ukraine, the Russians used both military and intelligence services, along with imported volunteers and paramilitaries. Although some of the details of the actual units employed are unclear, the basic structure for supporting their unconventional warfare and the limited invasions that followed is known.

Military Forces

Russia embarked on a new national and military strategy in the mid-2000s, which in turn required it to relook at the military services. The emphasis of the new strategy was the near abroad, with emphasis on the Russian Federation's periphery. The consequent "new-look" reforms aimed at a more streamlined, professional, and modernized force. Emerging challenges included international terrorism, narcotraffic, organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and regional and ethnic conflict. The old scenario of major theater war was retreating. In its place, Russia would seek to dominate, lead, and integrate CIS military security efforts (through the Collective Security Treaty Organization) while maintaining order along the periphery. Using both the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Russia sought to influence nearby states to reject NATO and the EU in favor of close relations with Moscow. From 2011, Putin sought to pressure peripheral states to join the EEU rather than associate with the EU. These efforts were attended by a renewed commitment from Moscow to foster and protect Russian diasporas abroad.

Putin and his associates saw NATO as the primary threat to their plans. Outright invasion from the West was not a likely scenario, but Russia foresaw that NATO and the EU, along with Western nongovernmental organizations, would attempt to intervene within peripheral states to turn them against Moscow. Simultaneously Putin sought ever greater cooperation with Beijing and pursued a lucrative deal to supply China with natural gas over the ensuing decades.

These changes in strategic outlook required corresponding changes in the military instrument. The 2008 Russo–Georgian War highlighted shortcomings throughout the Ministry of Defense and the armed forces in general. The war had been a watershed for Russia, representing, in essence, the last war of the twentieth century, fought with outdated tactics and equipment and with structures more suited to large-scale conventional war.[32]

The military new-look reforms therefore sought a professional and modernized force capable of conducting more effective operations, especially on the periphery. Key issues were command and control, personnel policies, training and readiness, equipment modernization, and the retention of nuclear deterrence.

To streamline command and control, new-look reforms organized the military into four geographic joint military districts: the Western, Central, Southern, and Eastern Military Districts. Divisions and regiments were eliminated and replaced by a brigade system for the Army, while the Air Force reorganized into air bases.[33] Navy units came under the command of military districts.[34] The Russian Army organized eighty-five brigades through 2009, including forty combined-arms brigades as well

as specialized brigades for missiles, artillery, rocket artillery, air defense, engineers, electronic warfare, reconnaissance, and special forces.

A major focus of the new-look reforms was the issue of conscripts. Demographics indicated a drop in available recruits, and reports that the conscripts were often found unfit for duty stimulated the Russian government to press for a dramatic change in the composition of the force. To boost recruitment the government increased pay, improved military housing, and launched a comprehensive public information campaign designed to inspire patriotism and respect for military service. By 2008, most of the airborne forces were made up of professional soldiers (called contract soldiers). Although the costs were high, Putin's administration saw the value of professionalizing the military and replacing conscripts with contract soldiers. The process is ongoing, and contract soldiers proved their worth in Ukraine.

The new-look reforms also took aim at equipment modernization. The emphasis was on command, control, information, navigation, and precision. At the individual level, Russian soldiers equipped with the "Ratnik" Future Soldier Individual Equipment Gear have better protection against small arms and employ a variety of subsystems, including reconnaissance, navigation, night optics, and communications. Mechanized forces benefited from procurement of lighter, more modern armored vehicles with digital communications. Old T-55 and T-62 tanks were replaced with modernized T-72B tanks.

In practice Russian Army Brigades do not deploy as whole organizations. Instead, operational commanders task organize Battalion Tactical Groups (BTGs) capable of independent combined-arms combat missions.[35] In the summer of 2014, at least thirteen BTGs and elements of five SPETSNAZ units were poised on the Ukrainian border.[36] The main military operations in Ukraine were commanded through Russia's Southern Military District with its headquarters in Rostov-on-Don. This command has responsibility for the Caucasus and southern Russia, as well as the Black Sea and Caspian Fleets. Per treaty provisions the Russians had forces positioned in Crimea, primarily used to secure the port of Sevastopol. The following units were known or suspected to have been involved in operations or to have been preparing for operations in Crimea, eastern Ukraine, or both:

- 18th Detached Yevpatorian Red Banner Guard Motorized Rifle Brigade (from the Chechen Republic)
    - 1st Mechanized Battalion (also known as Vostok)
- 31st Air Assault Brigade (Airborne Forces, Ulyanovsk)
- 76th Guards Air Assault Division (Airborne Forces, Pskov)
- 106th Guards Airborne Division (Airborne Forces, Tula)

- 98th Guards Airborne Division (Airborne Forces, Ivanova)
- 7th Guards Airborne Division (Airborne Forces, Novorossiysk)
- 22nd SPETSNAZ Brigade (GRU, Krasnodar Krai)
- 45th Detached Reconnaissance Regiment (Moscow)
- Black Sea Fleet (Sevastopol)
    - 810th Naval Infantry Brigade
    - Kuban Cossacks

SPETSNAZ

Russian SPETSNAZ are irregular forces that operate covertly, providing the Russian government plausible deniability. They are found throughout the military, intelligence, and security services. The SPETSNAZ-GRU (military intelligence) featured prominently in the annexation of Crimea.[37]

SPETSNAZ from the various services have different roles. Those in the FSB are tasked with fighting terrorism and protecting the constitution. They are divided into three groups: (1) Group Alpha; (2) Group Vympel; and (3) the Special Purpose Service. Alpha responds to terrorists and other extremist movements and hostage rescue. Vympel focuses on deep penetration, sabotage, and assassination. They use their skill sets to "red team" or test Russian security infrastructure.[38]

Russia's use of SPETSNAZ evolved since its involvement in Georgia in 2008. In Crimea and eastern Ukraine, SPETSNAZ operated in a clandestine manner, with their faces masked and wearing nondescript military clothing that bore no information identifying their unit.[39] These infamous little green men appeared during the decisive seizures or buildings and facilities, only to disappear when associated militias and local troops arrived to consolidate the gains. In this way they provided a measure of deniability—however superficial or implausible—for Moscow.[40]

The conflict in Ukraine demonstrates that Russia recruits SPETSNAZ agents from among the local populations within target countries, including pro-Russian nationalists, minorities, political dissidents, and criminals. When deployed, agents initially confine their efforts to political agitation and other nonkinetic methods aimed at creating a political environment favorable to Russian policies.[41]

Russian-Backed Proxy Organizations in Ukraine

Moscow is funding, training, and equipping numerous groups with Russian nationalist agendas in Ukraine.[42] They also employ sympathetic paramilitaries, such as former members of the Chechen "Vostok" Battalion.[43] A paramilitary group called

the Russian Orthodox Army began operating in the Donetsk region after the ouster of Yanukovych. Citing Igor Girkin (see next page) as its leader, the group boasts some four thousand operatives. They are motivated by their devotion to the Russian Orthodox Church and a strong sense of nationalistic outrage toward the encroachment of Western influence in the region. Members of the group train for and conduct special activities, including storming buildings, sniping, reconnaissance, and defense. They have admitted to journalists that some of their senior leaders are Russian.[44]

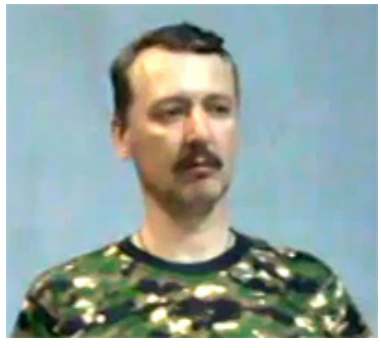
The Night Wolves motorcycle club is a proxy group of Russian nationalists founded in 1989. It has chapters in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Serbia, Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Germany. Led by Aleksander Zaldostanov "Surgeon," the group has an estimated five thousand members, including Vladimir Putin. The group is supported by the Russian Orthodox Church, and it often meets with domestic political and religious leaders. Many members are former soldiers, SPETSNAZ, or both. During the crisis in Crimea, the group arrived in the region, with members claiming that they wanted to ensure free and fair voting in the referendum for annexation and that they wanted to assist the people in their struggle against the "fascists" in Kyiv.[45]

Cossack paramilitaries operate in Ukraine and southern Russia. Since 2005 they have received support (including pay) from the Russian government. Forces are drawn from some six hundred thousand officially registered Cossacks in Russia. They are legally permitted to defend Russian borders, guard national forests, organize youth military training, fight terrorism, and protect local government facilities. During the Winter Olympics in Sochi, they engaged in security operations and were recorded using violence against protesters. Cossacks under Colonel Sergei Yurievich were used to defend Sevastopol and blockade and intimidate Ukrainian troops in Crimea. On orders of the FSB, Cossack irregular troops have also operated in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions in eastern Ukraine. Some of the Cossack groups are from Ukraine, while others came into the region from Russia. Elements of the former group intend to apply for integration into the Russian military after the annexation of Crimea.[46]

Chetnik Guards commanded by Bratislav Zivkovic formed an irregular unit in Crimea, and they operated in coordination with Cossack paramilitaries there. Chetnik soldiers typically have beards and wear a variety of camouflaged uniforms with shoulder patches including skull-and-crossbones insignia. They also wear distinctive black fur hats with tassels and carry long knives. The Chetniks came from Serbia, allegedly on their own initiative to assist their Slavic brothers in their fight against the West.[47]

Russian-Backed Agents in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine

Igor Girkin (also known as Igor Strelkov) is a Russian citizen who helped organize and lead the insurgency in the Donbass region. Previously he served in the 45th Detached Reconnaissance Regiment, the FSB, and the GRU and was involved in numerous other conflicts, including those in Bosnia, Chechnya, and Transnistria. He has been accused of organizing civilian massacres in Bosnia and kidnappings and murders in Chechnya. Before he entered eastern Ukraine, Girkin led paramilitary groups in Crimea and negotiated with Ukrainian military officers in attempts to induce them to defect to Russia. Girkin organized volunteer militia forces in Crimea, drawing on Russians with military experience and pro-Russian Ukrainians. Ukrainian intelligence (the Security Service of Ukraine, SBU) alleges that Girkin was under the direct authority of Moscow, which supplied him and other leaders with weapons, all with the approval of Putin. Girkin has been accused of murdering a local Ukrainian politician, Volodymyr Rybak, and a nineteen-year-old college student, Yury Popravko.



Igor Girkin (also known as Strelkov)

In April 2014 Girkin emerged as the leader of the Donetsk People's Republic and claimed he had command of all its forces, but he continued to deny Russian connections. On July 5 Girkin fled from Slovyansk as Ukrainian forces moved to retake the city—a move that attracted criticism and outright condemnation from fellow insurgents and ultranationalists in Russia. Girkin was later accused of involvement in the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17. According to some reports, he ordered the collection of valuables from the dead passengers and crew, the proceeds of which would fund the insurgency in the Donetsk People's Republic. He is also believed to be the author of a conspiracy theory that the aircraft was unmanned, deliberately downed, and then filled with corpses to create an international incident. Girkin's status as of this writing is uncertain. He is alleged to have been wounded in battle, but other reports suggest the FSB removed him from leadership of the insurgency because he failed to fully comply with Moscow's directives.

Alexander Borodai is a Ukrainian with strong ties to Russia and has lived and studied in Moscow. A close associate of Girkin and Konstantin Malofeev, Borodai was appointed the prime minister of the Donetsk People's Republic but later resigned the office and returned to Russia. He is alleged to have served in the FSB as a director who achieved the rank of major general, a claim he denies.

Igor Besler, a former lieutenant colonel in the Russian GRU, also led insurgent operations in Crimea and Ukraine. Of mixed German-Ukrainian descent, he considers

himself Russian and studied at the Dzerzhinsky Military Academy in the mid-1990s. According to Ukrainian intelligence, he was contacted by the GRU in February 2014 and directed to move into Crimea and help organize the uprising there. He has been implicated in numerous murders and summary executions of captured combatants in Ukraine and was also tied to the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17.

Alexey Mozgovoy is a Ukrainian insurgent leader and commander of the so-called Ghost Brigade in eastern Ukraine. His ancestry emanates from the Don Cossacks, and he considers Russia to be his "second home." He is a close associate of Girkin and lamented his departure in a September 2014 interview, insisting that Girkin must return because "no one can replace him." Mozgovoy claims that Russia is providing "mostly humanitarian aid" and that many of the pro-Russian fighters in Ukraine are foreigners who have come to fight against "fascism" and the Western imperialists. He also distanced himself from Yanukovych and the Party of Regions, insisting that the Ukrainian oligarchs who lead the party do not serve the interests of the people. Mozgovoy has been seen traveling openly in Moscow, where he enjoys celebrity status including requests for autographs. His Ghost Brigade, according to his interview, includes Russians, local Ukrainian militiamen, and foreign fighters from Germany, Bulgaria, and Slovakia.

Alexey Mozgovoy

Alexander Mozhaev is a Cossack militia leader operating in eastern Ukraine at the behest of the Putin regime. In interviews Mozhaev boasts of the ferocity of the Cossack warbands (e.g., the Wolf's Hundred) who are fighting the Kyiv government in the interests of Russia. He and his followers are motivated by Russian nationalism, Russian Orthodoxy, and a hatred of Western encroachment into Russia's sphere. Supported and authorized to act from Moscow, the Cossack leaders, including Mozhaev, maintain tenuous and deniable links to Russia to ensure they retain their freedom to act as volunteer paramilitaries.

Russian Information Warfare in Ukraine

Russian information operations (IO) include the use of cyberwarfare. Typical computer network operations feature attacks aimed at disrupting enemy infrastructure and command. Similar to the Russian prelude to its 2008 conflict in Georgia, Crimea's landline, Internet, and mobile services were nearly eliminated. Hacktivists using the names Cyber Berkut and Ukraine Anonymous fought back, attacking Russian government sites and the Russia Today news agency.[48]

Igor Panarin's thinking on Russian information warfare likely influenced Putin's strategy in Ukraine. In March 2014 Panarin commented on the Crimean operation and stressed that through careful preparation of the information environment, Russia was able to obviate a more violent scenario. He contrasted this performance with operations in 2008, as well as with the poor performance of the West. He likewise praised what he termed "the valor of Berkut"—a reference to the Ukrainian secret police organization officially disestablished by the Kyiv government in the wake of the organization's alleged massacres of protesters. The Crimean branch of Berkut was subsequently absorbed into the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs. Finally, he attributed the Crimean success to the personal leadership of Vladimir Putin, who centralized the control of all the key political, economic, financial, military, intelligence, and information tools.

Panarin accused the West (the United States in particular) of instigating Euromaidan in Ukraine. On the basis of that premise, he views the conflict as a battle between the US-led coalition and Russia, rather than as a spontaneous domestic movement in western Ukraine. He predicts the imminent collapse of the "American–British" empire that has dominated modern history and its replacement by a large coalition of powers stretching from Egypt to China and dominated by Russia. In its new role as the leader of a multipolar world, Russia's three pillars of power will be spirituality, state power, and cyber-sovereignty.

Alexandr Dugin acknowledges that the country contains both ethnic Russians and pro-Russian populations on the one hand and West-leaning Europeans on the other. He regards the country as an artificial contrivance that inappropriately combined these two groups within a common border. Washington, he claims, is intent on pushing the divide between the two groups to the east—indeed, to the very border of Russia. Instead, Moscow must dominate that struggle through a vigorous information campaign and push the divide westward. In Crimea Russian *spetzpropaganda* developed the theme that pro-Russian intervention was necessary to save the people from succumbing to "Banderivtsy and fascists from the Maidan."

When necessary, Russian information warfare must include the military dimension. But both Panarin and Dugin prescribe a paradigm of military operations that is utterly different from that of the massive Russian armies of World War II. In the Crimean operation, unidentified Russian military personnel entered the conflict region and preempted the adversary by rapidly occupying decisive points—airports, media outlets, and other key infrastructure. Armed but not wearing uniforms, the Russian agents provided Moscow with deniability—if not plausible deniability. The pro-Western press called the intruders little green men, but Dugin refers to them as "nice men"—citing their politeness and their diplomatic withdrawal once an area was secured. The goal is the very essence of Sun Tzu's "winning without fighting" ideal. In Crimea, it worked. In eastern Ukraine, it fell short and led to bloodshed.

Russian proponents of information warfare are not shy about sharing some of the salacious details of the operations in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. One pundit applauded the Russians' use of blackmail, psychological manipulation, and threats of nuclear war. But what makes these acts justifiable in the eyes of their champions is that they are defensive in nature. Each of the information warfare pundits portrays Russia's operations as reactions to American provocation. Because the West is victimizing Russia, everything becomes permissible in the pursuit of "true justice."

International Information Themes

Moscow combined secrecy, deception, threats, and accusations in crafting the narrative for the international community. Throughout the campaigns in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, Putin and his agents denied Russian involvement while simultaneously touting their military (including nuclear) capabilities if they were pushed too far. While dismissing evidence of Russian troops in the region, they accused the West of meddling in Ukrainian affairs and warmongering.

The coordinated information warfare campaign was carefully crafted to modify the messaging to the West. In Russian media outlets aimed at American and European audiences, the themes were changed slightly to tout the essential "democracy" of Russia's actions in Ukraine. Everything came about because of the "people's choice," and Russia simply acted in accordance with local wishes. Other messaging targeted the pacifist sectors of the West by both threatening war and simultaneously assuring the world that Russia wanted peace. If Moscow fell short of convincing the more cynical critical thinkers in the West, it nevertheless persisted in reiterating its themes of justifiable intervention.

Indoctrination of Ethnic Russians in Ukraine

Russian information warfare likewise targeted key proxies in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, preparing them for resistance against Kyiv, a separatist insurgency, and, finally, annexation by Russia. Their challenge was difficult because the West seemingly offered democracy—a form of government that Western culture views as the sine qua non for personal liberty, security, peace, and prosperity. Conversely, Russian information warfare proselytizes for a different path: a neoconservative postliberal struggle for true justice in a multipolar world. This plan for governance, which the West contemptuously dismisses as autocratic, seeks to defend tradition, conservative values, and "true" liberty.

From Moscow's viewpoint, the West likewise seeks to bedazzle and entice former Russian clients with promises of economic prosperity and opportunity. Russian information warfare countered by pointing out that the reverse was actually true: to achieve membership in the EU and the WTO, Ukrainians would be bullied into "austerity" programs aimed at curbing government spending. Conversely, align-

ment with Russia and integration into the EEU would bring immediate economic aid. This thesis was reinforced with action. Shortly after Crimea's annexation, Russian funds and support programs arrived in abundance. Likewise, when Yanukovych bowed to Russian pressure, Putin immediately responded with a generous proposal to buy up Ukrainian debt and cut gas prices by a third. These actions were not simple acts of diplomacy or economics. They were integral parts of a broad information campaign designed to combat Western paradigms and reeducate Ukrainians along Moscow's lines of thinking.

Within the Russian periphery, the RT (Russia Today) television network offers the best programming available. High standards for production attract viewers of all political persuasions who are drawn to the form, if not the content, of the television shows. By ensuring a sustained appeal, especially to the youth, RT gives Moscow the commanding heights of the information war and a strong voice wherever its signal is broadcast and not deliberately blocked.

Domestic Messaging

To garner support at home for Russian adventures in Ukraine and Crimea, the Putin administration crafted a picture of NATO encroachment toward the borders of Russia and even proposed that the West, led by the United States, intended to annex Crimea. Sevastopol would become a NATO naval base.

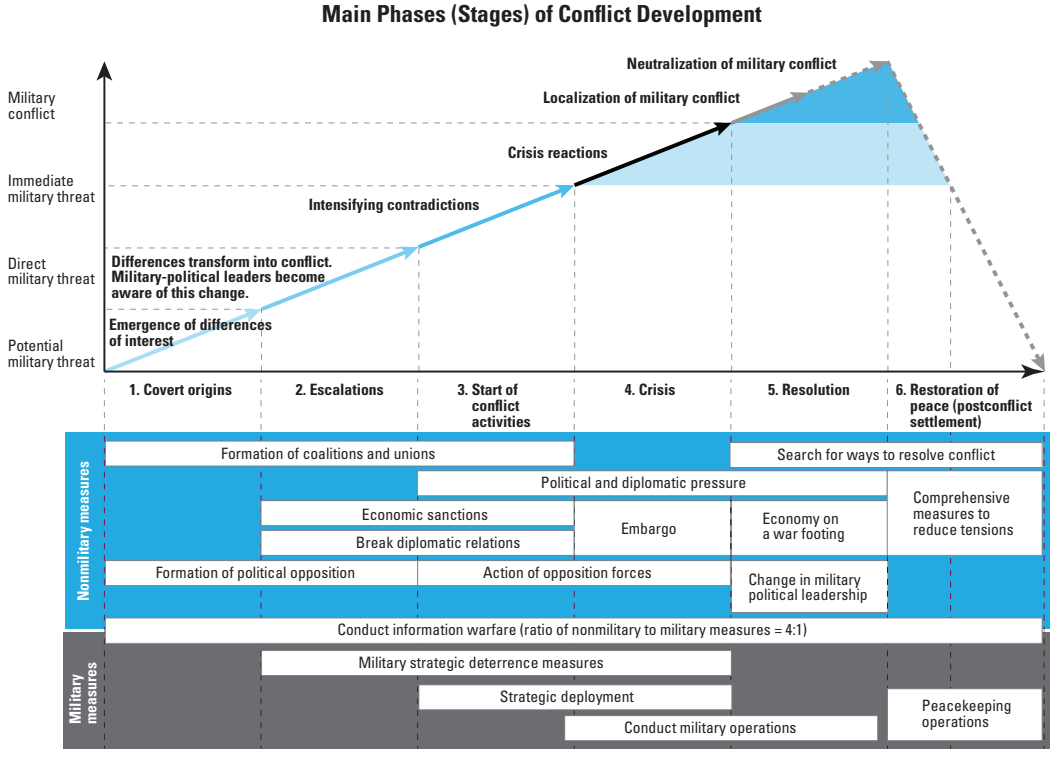
Related to this theme was the notion that the Russian people—with their history of religious, cultural, and military greatness—were artificially divided after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Once again the West was behind the nefarious plot to keep the Russian people from enjoying unity, peace, security, and their rightful place in the world order.

The Gerasimov Model in Action: Russian Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, 2013–2014

This study uses an analytical framework derived from the work of General Valery Gerasimov, chief of the general staff of the Russian Federation. General Gerasimov's main thesis is that modern conflict differs significantly from the paradigm of World War II and even from Cold War conflict. In place of declared wars, strict delineation of military and nonmilitary efforts, and large conventional forces fighting climactic battles, modern conflict instead features undeclared wars, hybrid operations combining military and nonmilitary activities, and smaller precision-based forces. Gerasimov, observing American and European experiences in the Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the intervention in Libya, notes that political, economic,

cultural, and other nonmilitary factors play decisive roles. Indeed, even humanitarian operations should be considered part of an unconventional warfare campaign.

Gerasimov's model is a useful construct for analyzing Russian actions in Crimea and Ukraine because it makes clear that political, economic, and intelligence efforts precede (indeed, can even bypass) military action. His explanation implies that the state prosecuting the unconventional warfare campaign must be in control of the catalysts and crises that lead to escalation and resolution, rather than simply react to events. In the 2014 campaigns in Crimea and Ukraine, Russia in fact controlled and exercised a strong grip on the pace of many of the headline events.



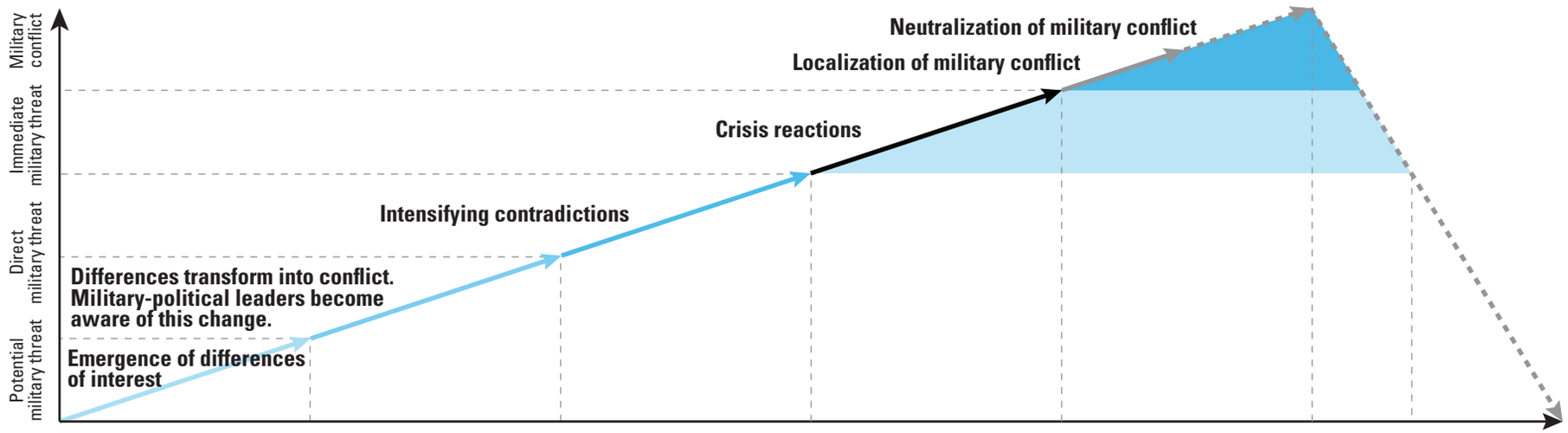
The role of nonmilitary methods in interstate conflict resolution

The ouster of Yanukovych and the threat of armed action by the hard-right opposition led to the next phase of Russia's effort to impose its will on Ukraine. At the start of the conflict Russia turned its focus on securing Crimea. Later, after the annexation of Crimea, Putin's priority turned toward securing Russian influence and control over eastern Ukraine, in part to maintain a land bridge to Crimea. **While the covert origins and escalations stages of Gerasimov's model are related for both Crimea and eastern Ukraine, two different timelines began to manifest for the later stages: one for Crimea and the other for eastern Ukraine.**

Main phases (stages) of conflict development in Crimea

Gerasimov's Model in Crimea

- The **covert origins** stage featured a long period of political infighting in Kyiv, culminating in an unforeseen crisis for Putin.
- During the **escalations stage** Putin took actions calculated to de-escalate the situation, but they had the opposite effect.
- The **start of conflict** activities was relatively sudden and brief, quickly transitioning to the next stage. This suggests intensive and deliberate planning designed to preempt any embryonic resistance forming against Putin's designs.
- The **crisis stage** featured nearly flawless execution of Russia's new information-based warfare, culminating in a staged referendum and political decision.
- During the **resolutions stage**, Putin's autocratic government rapidly sealed the annexation with a legal form. With Russian troops firmly in control of Crimea, he was able to present the world with a fait accompli.
- The **restoration of peace** stage was facilitated in part by the upswing of conflict in eastern Ukraine, so as to divert attention away from Crimea.



1. Covert origins

Dec. 1991
Ukraine declares independence. Pro-Western and pro-Russian factions form.

2004–2005
Orange Revolution brings pro-Western President Yushchenko to power.

2010–2013
Pro-Russian President Yanukovych elected. Under Russian pressure, he abandons deal with EU in late 2013, sparking Maidan protests.

Dec. 2013
Putin responds with trade and financial deals intended to calm protests and bring Ukraine into EEU.

2. Escalations

Feb. 18, 2014
Protests in Kyiv against President Victor Yanukovych become violent.

Feb. 21, 2014
Yanukovych flees Kyiv. Putin condemns interim pro-Western government.

Feb. 23, 2014
Pro-Russian protests in Sevastopol, supported by Russian elements.

Feb. 23, 2014
Russian naval infantry recon in Kherson isthmus.

3. Start of conflict activities

Feb. 27, 2014
Ukrainian naval bases in Sevastopol blockaded; pro-Russian gunmen seize government buildings in Simferopol.

4. Crisis

Feb. 28, 2014
Russian troops seize Crimean border crossings. IL-76 aircraft begin flying Russian troops into region.

Mar. 1, 2014
Russia formally authorizes use of Russian troops in Crimea. Kirovske air base seized.

Mar. 5, 2014
Russian navy blockades Ukrainian navy at Novoozerne. OSCE inspectors turned away at border crossing.

Mar. 8–22, 2014
Russian troops seize additional sites and consolidate positions.

5. Resolution

Mar. 11–18, 2014
Referendum and subsequent treaty leads to Russian annexation of Crimea into Russian Federation.

Mar. 21, 2014
Russia formally annexes Crimea.

Mar. 24, 2014
Ukraine orders troops to withdraw from Crimea.

6. Restoration of peace

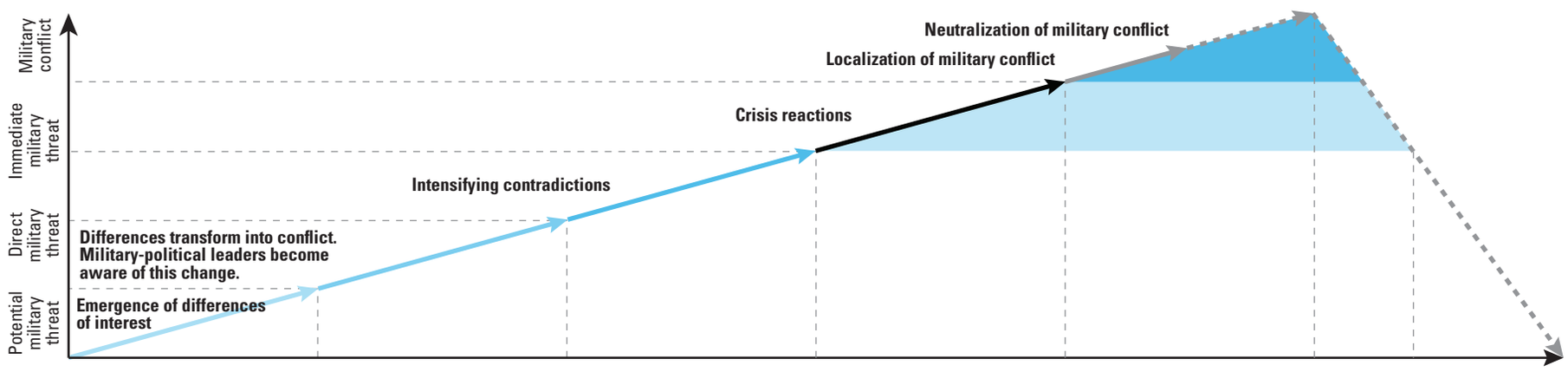
Late Mar. 2014–Present
United States and EU impose sanctions, but annexation remains in effect; popular approval in Crimea and Russia boosts Putin's political fortunes. Focus of conflict moves to eastern Ukraine.

Nonmilitary measures
Military measures

Main phases (stages) of conflict development in eastern Ukraine

Gerasimov's Model in Eastern Ukraine

- The **covert origins** stage featured a long period of political infighting in Kyiv, culminating in an unforeseen crisis for Putin.
- During the **escalations stage** Putin took actions calculated to de-escalate the situation, but they had the opposite effect. The March 2014 annexation of Crimea led to an upswing of unrest in eastern Ukraine.
- The **start of conflict activities** was framed by Russia's deceptive diplomatic agreement at Geneva—setting the stage for Putin's sustained unconventional warfare campaign in eastern Ukraine under an umbrella of persistent denial.
- The **crisis stage** came to a head with the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17, which fueled growing international condemnation of Putin's intervention in Ukraine.
- The hoped-for **resolutions stage** instead saw surprising political resilience from the Kyiv government and people of Ukraine against Russian aggression. US, EU, and NATO support, along with Russia's severe economic downturn and President Poroshenko's sustained counteroffensive, led Russia to resort to increasingly explicit invasion.
- The **restoration of peace stage** remains in doubt as the US government passes a renewed sanctions law and threatens to begin giving military aid to Kyiv.



1. Covert origins

Dec. 1991
Ukraine declares independence. Pro-Western and pro-Russian factions form.

2004–2005
Orange Revolution brings pro-Western President Yushchenko to power.

2010–2013
Pro-Russian President Yanukovych elected. Under Russian pressure, he abandons deal with EU in late 2013, sparking Maidan protests.

Dec. 2013
Putin responds with trade and financial deals intended to calm protests and bring Ukraine into EEU.

2. Escalations

Feb. 18, 2014
Protests in Kyiv against President Victor Yanukovych become violent.

Feb. 21, 2014
Yanukovych flees Kyiv. Putin condemns interim pro-Western government.

Mar. 11–21, 2014
Referendum and subsequent treaty leads to Russian annexation of Crimea into the Russian Federation. Kyiv government signs Association Agreement with EU.

Mar. 22, 2014
Protesters in Donetsk call for referendum on integration with Russia.

3. Start of conflict activities

Mar.–Apr. 2014
Russian agents organize, lead, and cooperate with protesters in major cities and port of Mariupol. Pro-Russian crowds and "little green men" seize government buildings. Russians use bribery, intimidation, and subversion to neutralize government officials, police, and some military units.

Mar. 24, 2014
Russia expelled from G8.

Apr. 17, 2014
Geneva agreement (US, Ukraine, EU, Russia) calls for de-escalation, disarming militias. Russia fails to comply.

Apr. 27, 2014
Russian agents and militias seize television station in Donetsk, replacing Ukrainian media with Russia Today.

Mar.–Apr. 2014
Cossack militias, Chechens, and others begin operations in eastern Ukraine.

4. Crisis

May 1, 2014
Ukraine resumes conscription in face of ongoing aggression in east and south.

May 2, 2014
~40 pro-Russian activists die in a fire in Odessa.

May 11, 2014
Luhansk and Donestsk referenda on independence; alleged results strongly favor separation from Kyiv and annexation by Russia.

May 25, 2014
Poroshenko elected.

Jun. 16, 2014
Russia cuts off natural gas to Ukraine.

Jun. 27, 2014
Poroshenko signs trade agreement with EU.

Jul. 17, 2014
Malaysian Flight 17 downed.

Summer 2014
As Kyiv commences counteroffensive, Russian troops, armored vehicles, weapons, and supplies enter Ukraine.

Aug. 14, 2014
NATO confirms "Russian incursion."

5. Resolution

Sep. 5, 2014
OSCE helps negotiate cease-fire.

Sep. 2014
President Poroshenko promises greater autonomy in eastern Ukraine.

Sep. 15, 2014
US-led NATO peacekeeping exercises commence in western Ukraine.

Oct. 18–31, 2014
Putin and Poroshenko negotiate natural gas deal.

Oct. 26, 2014
Ukrainians elect pro-Western–majority parliament.

Nov. 2014
Separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk hold elections condemned by Kyiv. More Russian troops enter Ukraine.

Despite cease-fire, fighting continues, at times escalating to major battles. Russian tanks enter, but Western sanctions and Russia's economic downturn chip away at Russians' support for war.

6. Restoration of peace

Conflict continues.

Nonmilitary measures

Military measures

Covert Origins

The late 1990s gave rise to what some Russian powerful elites considered their nightmare scenario: NATO extending eastward from Germany to the borders of Russia. When the government of Ukraine made a bid for inclusion into the alliance, Russian strategists, including Putin, laid plans to ensure Moscow's control of eastern Ukraine and especially of Crimea—home to a key naval base. Therefore, since before the start of the new millennium the Russians had begun to exert covert pressure on Crimea and Ukraine. It would take the catalyst of Kyiv attempting an economic union with Western Europe to push the Putin regime into a more assertive strategy.

Russia's actions against Ukraine began most notably with its diplomatic pressure on the government of President Yanukovych, leading to his volte-face regarding integration into the EU, announced on November 21, 2013. Putin's government pushed Yanukovych to retreat from Ukraine's stated intention to sign the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU. At this point the Russian government had not necessarily decided to make the dramatic moves it later accomplished because the Yanukovych government complied with Moscow's desires. Diplomatic pressure and contacts with key Ukrainian leaders also led to the parliament rejecting legislation that would have allowed former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko to leave the country. These developments would have led Russian strategists following Gerasimov's model to conclude that they had bypassed intermediate stages and achieved resolution and restoration of peace. But by the end of the month, growing popular protests against the Yanukovych government led to Kyiv police using violence in an attempt to disperse the crowds. Instead, the protesters' numbers grew. The resulting Euromaidan movement demanded closer ties with the West, and the related Automaidan movement demanded the removal of Yanukovych. The crisis stimulated Russia's use of "new-generation warfare" to achieve its goals in Ukraine.

The covert origins phase included key diplomatic and economic moves. On December 16, pursuant to Yanukovych's visit to Moscow, Putin's government announced $15 billion in loans to Ukraine and substantial discounts on imported natural gas. These actions targeted Ukraine's financial vulnerability and fed one of Putin's main information warfare themes—that alignment with Russia brings economic benefit to all Ukrainians. By way of contrast, the EU and IMF called for Ukraine to deal with its debt problem with austerity programs that were sure to alienate the population.

Russia's measures over the Christmas holiday appear to have been successful in lessening popular resistance to the Yanukovych government, and Putin's agents attempted to facilitate negotiations between the president and his opponents. Once again it may have appeared that Russia was on the verge of achieving its goals. But by mid-January 2014, ongoing protests led Yanukovych's Party of Regions to

pass legislation in the Rada targeting demonstrators and threatening them with harsh punishment, including imprisonment and fines. Over the next month violent clashes ensued, resulting in six anti-government demonstrators' deaths and more than two hundred jailed.

Escalations (February 20–22)

Information warfare—primarily in the form of aggressive propaganda against Kyiv—along with diplomatic and political efforts, commenced in earnest in early February. Crimean Tatars protested the region's Rada deputies who had labeled the resistance in Kyiv as fascist—a key argument of Putin's information campaign. By associating the pro-Western faction in Ukraine as fascist and Nazi, the Russians aimed at preempting the battle for legitimacy. As the crisis deepened, Moscow began to unfold a two-pronged effort—ongoing involvement in the political chaos in Kyiv and a more focused effort to use the situation to facilitate Russia's designs for Crimea.

On the heels of Yanukovych's setbacks in late February, the Russian GRU dispatched several hundred members of 45th SPETSNAZ Regiment to Crimea to create a "popular uprising" aimed at facilitating Russia's annexation of the region. Simultaneously GRU agents used bribery among the ethnic Russian population to win support for annexation. During this phase the Russian objective was to create the political conditions necessary for later decisive military and paramilitary action.[49]

On February 20, more than sixty people were killed in Kyiv in the bloodiest crackdown of the crisis. Putin's government, smarting from a significant political setback, resorted to strong diplomatic and economic pressure aimed at dividing and disrupting the political opposition in Ukraine. But the opposition in Kyiv had been emboldened and moved on to negotiate a settlement agreement with the beleaguered Yanukovych on February 21. Under the agreement, mediated by Russia, France, Germany, and Poland (although Russia did not sign the resulting document), Ukraine would hold presidential elections by the end of the year and a national unity government would form by early March. The country would be returned to the 2004 constitution, with a consequent reduction in the powers of the president. Yanukovych fled the country that night and later resurfaced in Russia.

The United Nations reports that overt violence was paralleled by a wide array of human rights violations to include kidnapping, torture, and murder.[50] In late January two activists, Yuriy Verbytsky and Ihor Lutsenko were abducted and beaten. Wounded and released into a wood with sub-freezing temperatures, Verbytsky died from exposure, Lutsenko made it back to safety.[51]

But while this political setback for Russia unfolded in Kyiv, Putin was making his more important diplomatic move in Crimea. Crimean member of parliament (MP) Vladimir Klychnikov called for constitutional amendments and a poll on the status of Crimea and suggested an "appeal to the President and the legislative assembly of the Russian Federation to be the guarantors of inviolability of the status of Crimean autonomy and rights and freedoms of Crimean residents." MP Volodymyr Konstantinov stated that Crimea might secede from Ukraine if tensions escalated further. This sparked a reaction from Refat Chubarov, who responded, "This is our land, our country. We will not allow this to happen. This is sedition." As before, Russia tried (and perhaps succeeded among the population) to seize the moral high ground in the battle for legitimacy by characterizing the actions of the Kyiv government as fascist.

The ongoing conflict led to Russia's commencement of activities associated with the escalations phase of conflict. This stage is characterized mainly by a sharp increase in diplomatic and economic pressure on the subject state.

In accordance with the Gerasimov model, the third stage, start of conflict activities, began in Crimea. Eastern Ukraine remained in the escalations stage at this point and progressed into stage three only after Russia's annexation of Crimea. Thus, this analysis first examines the application of Gerasimov's stages three through six in Crimea, after which it will turn to the model's application to eastern Ukraine.

Russian Operations in Crimea

Start of Conflict Activities (February 22–26)

This phase is characterized by the mobilization of active opposition forces, including demonstrators and armed militias. Nonkinetic factors still play the principal role in conflict resolution, but irregular forces—both domestic and those imported by the external supporter—begin to act. In addition, Russia increased the pace and visibility of its strategic mobilization of forces to assembly areas adjacent to the troubled regions.

Instead of backing down to Russian pressure, the invigorated Rada in Kyiv voted to impeach Yanukovych. An interim president was appointed—Oleksander Turchynov, formerly speaker of the parliament. Opposition leaders decided to move presidential elections to the coming spring. Yanukovych's Party of Regions began to distance itself from the ousted president, and some of his allies and former ministers were arrested. These developments sparked pro-Russian demonstrations in Crimea, and Russian military forces from the Southern District began to mobilize and prepare for deployment to the region. In eastern Ukraine and Crimea, pro-Russian demonstrators labeled the new regime in Kyiv as fascist. The vilification of the Kyiv reformers as fascists—a key theme of Putin's information

campaign—suggests that Russia was working to influence, organize, and even lead the protests.

The pro-Western factions in Kyiv enjoyed a brief period of triumph, and they moved to disband the elite Berkut police unit that had been blamed for the deaths of protesters. The Putin government responded to its setback in Kyiv by sparking a crisis in Crimea.

Crisis (February 27–March 15)

During the crisis phase, Russian strategy calls for the commencement of explicit military action, as well as an embargo or similar economic suasion. Depending on which sources are consulted, Russia either supported or actively led an upsurge in pro-Russian demonstrations and violence in Crimea. On the heels of the Ukrainian Rada passing a bill removing Russian as an official language, pro-Russian groups in Crimea began mobilizing militias. Unidentified armed groups—most analysts concluded that they were Russian special forces and intelligence operatives—began military operations to seize airports and take control of the peninsula. Military assets moved in from Russia, including wheeled armored personnel carriers and helicopters. The unidentified operatives in Crimea used Russian military vehicles, but they otherwise hid their links to the Russian military, and Moscow denied any involvement. Local militias worked with and supported the unidentified troops. Despite initial denials, the headquarters of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol later admitted that its troops had moved into Crimea to secure the port. On March 6, the Russian Black Sea Fleet blockaded Ukrainian ships in Novoozerne, Donuzlav Lake. Russia likewise achieved an effective isolation of the region through military demonstrations along the Ukrainian border. On March 9 the Kyiv government confirmed that it did not intend to send Ukrainian military forces into Crimea. The following few days were marked by surrounding and isolating Ukrainian forces in their bases and mobilizing political support for regional regime change. The mayor of Sevastopol was replaced by a Russian citizen, Alexei Chaliy.

On March 1 the Russian Federation parliament approved President Putin's request to use armed force in Ukraine to protect Russian interests. The newly installed pro-Russian mayor insisted to supportive crowds that Crimea would no longer accept orders from the illegal regime in Kyiv. Soon after, MPs in the Crimean Rada announced new planned measures to achieve greater autonomy for the region. Putin's government chimed in, declaring to the international community that Moscow would support "greater federalism" in Ukraine. In March the State Duma Committee on CIS Affairs announced plans for new legal procedures to annex territories into the Russian Federation. Timed as it was with Crimea's announcement that it wanted to be incorporated into Russia, it was a clear use of a political statement as a catalyst for separatism in the region.

Putin's diplomatic arm held the international community at bay through the pretense of peace talks in Paris in early March. But the event served only to further Moscow's disinformation campaign against the Kyiv government, because Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov refused to meet with Ukrainian foreign minister Andriy Deshchytsia, alleging that he represented an illegal government. When asked whether he had met with the Ukrainian representative, Lavrov replied, "Who is it? I didn't see anyone." The theme was parroted by the pro-Russian faction in Crimea on March 6, when the de facto prime minister Sergey Aksyonov refused to enter into negotiations with Kyiv on the grounds that the government there was an illegal entity.

During the crisis phase, Russian strategy calls for embargoes and other economic sanctions. On March 7 Gazprom announced that it might suspend service unless Ukraine settled its previous debt for natural gas and finance current supplies. This use of economic blackmail was obvious as it came on the heels of Crimea's split from Ukraine.

In a move calculated to grab the attention of Western leaders, on March 8 Russia announced that it was considering ending START inspections in response to US and European agitation concerning Ukraine. The intent was to demonstrate to the West that while the matter of Ukraine may have some weight within NATO's strategic formulation, it was no less than a vital interest to Russia. It would not be the last time that Putin rattled his nuclear sword.

Resolution (March 16–19)

During conflict resolution, military operations reach their zenith with decisive defeat of any armed adversaries. Once the political objectives have been secured, leaders then transition to the next phase—restoration of peace—as a way of signaling a successful resolution. In just over three weeks of conflict, the Russians had achieved the surrender of all 190 Ukrainian bases in Crimea without firing a shot.

On March 16, the interim Crimean government held a referendum concerning secession from Ukraine and annexation into Russia. They announced that some 97 percent of the Crimean population supported such a move—a seeming impossibility, given the ethnic and language distribution on the peninsula. Two days later, Vladimir Putin signed a bill to absorb Crimea into the Russian Federation. In response the government of Ukraine, the EU, the G7, and the United States all stated that they would not recognize the results of the illegal referendum. The Venice Commission likewise ruled it illegal. On March 19, three hundred Crimean "self-defense" troops, likely led by Russian agents, stormed the headquarters of the Ukrainian Navy in Sevastopol and briefly detained Rear Admiral Sergey Gaiduk. Ukraine's troops departed without violence, and the Russian flag was raised over captured

installations. The same day officials in Kyiv announced plans to pull twenty-five thousand Ukrainian troops out of Crimea and declared their break with the CIS.

The bold gamble appeared to pay off. Western powers responded with threats of further sanctions, but they simultaneously called on Russia to "pull back its troops" rather than insisting on a return to Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea. Even Kyiv seemed quickly distracted by events in eastern Ukraine, and the Crimean annexation seemingly became a fait accompli.

Restoration of Peace (March 19–31)

On March 31, 2014, Russian prime minister Dmitry Medvedev visited Crimea and promised substantial economic aid, marking the beginning of the restoration of peace phase in Crimea. Tensions were quickly reduced in the region, and Russian business leaders acted quickly to help integrate the region into the Russian economy. At the same time, leaders in Russia, Ukraine, and the West turned their attention to matters in eastern Ukraine, effectively acquiescing toward events in Crimea.

Russian Operations in Eastern Ukraine

Start of Conflict Activities (March 1–August 1)

Ukrainian officials accused Russia of assisting separatists. Foreign Minister Andriy Deschchytsya noted that the solider who captured government buildings carried Russian battle rifles, not Ukrainian weapons.[52]

Throughout March and April, pro-Russian demonstrators marched in the Donbass region, seizing government buildings in Donetsk, Luhansk, Slovyansk, Kharkiv, Kramatorsk, Horlivka, and the Black Sea port of Mariupol. Ukrainian and Western sources allege that Russian intelligence agents and special forces subordinate to the GRU led the demonstrations. Some observers claimed that Russia sent in operatives who acted in the role of local agitators, with some even appearing in various towns throughout the crisis. Although the demonstrators adopted the theme that they represented a large majority of separatists who desired incorporation into the Russian Federation, subsequent analysis makes clear that Russian agents staged the movement and that relatively few Ukrainians sympathized with the demonstrators.

On March 24 Russia was expelled from the G8 in a move that heralded the international community's intent to bring diplomatic and economic pressure against Moscow's adventuring in Ukraine. Putin's response was to dismiss the move publicly, but he also pursued a diplomatic strategy that gave the appearance of cooperation with Western powers. Russia participated in four power talks in Geneva (United States, EU, Ukraine, Russia) that produced a broad agreement on

de-escalation on April 17. Russia's stated intentions, however, did not match its continued intervention in the east.

A key tactic in Russian unconventional warfare is using bribery or intimidation to coerce local officials to abandon their posts. On April 12, militants likely led by Russian agents stormed the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Donetsk and convinced the chief of office there to resign. Facing crumbling opposition, the demonstrators seized the public administration building on April 16 and the television station on April 27. With Russian assistance they curtailed Ukrainian broadcasts and replaced them with Russian television.

In a similar way, pro-Russian militants stormed public buildings in Slovyansk, and the mayor there, Nelya Shtepa, acquiesced in the seizures, acknowledging Russia's control of the operation and welcoming its involvement. She was nevertheless detained and replaced with Vyacheslav Ponomaryov. When the militants went on to capture the police headquarters and seized the weapons there, government forces launched a counterattack (April 13) and retook the city on July 5.

Police officials in Horlivka also defected to the attacking rebel militias, while the chief of police was captured and beaten. A city council deputy, Volodymyr Rybak, was snatched by the militia and later killed. By July Ukrainian forces had retaken the city.

Coercion also targeted Ukrainian military forces. Militants claimed that on several occasions convoys from the 25th Airborne Brigade were stopped by angry locals. In one instance, the unit involved allegedly surrendered, and the militants commandeered their armored fighting vehicles. On another occasion, a convoy was forced to unload its weapons and hand over its magazines before the crowd let it proceed. Because of these episodes, the Ukrainian authorities disbanded the brigade.

Another characteristic of unconventional warfare is the use of proxies—local self-defense militias, mutineers from government forces, and imported militants. In eastern Ukraine the Russians have allegedly imported foreign paramilitary groups, including the Wolves' Head Battalion—a Cossack group known to have fought with the Russians in Georgia in 2008. In eastern Ukraine, however, the group was not deployed as an auxiliary to the Russian main force. Instead, it fought as a proxy in the absence of Russian conventional forces. Members of the group claimed officially that they had come to the region on their own initiatives for ideological reasons, to defend Russian Orthodoxy and the Russian regime. But in interviews with *Time* magazine journalists, they admitted that they are paid, equipped, and deployed by Vladimir Putin's government. They were led by Evgeny Evgenievich Ponomaryov, a Russian citizen.

As the Kyiv government began "anti-terrorist" operations in mid-April to retake seized buildings and defeat the Russian-led "separatist" forces, the SPETSNAZ and

associated operatives demonstrated another effective tactic. On several occasions, as government forces with mechanized combat vehicles arrived on scene, masses of pro-Russian citizens surrounded an armored vehicle to act as human shields, immobilizing the target. Then the Russian SPETSNAZ attacked and disarmed Ukrainian soldiers. The targeted soldiers, cut off from supplies and given vague orders, refrained from shooting and complied with demands for withdrawal after disabling their weapons. In other cases government forces successfully defended themselves and their installations from attacks.

As officials in Kyiv struggled to find a way to resist Russian aggression in the east, Yulia Tymoshenko formed a resistance movement with more than twenty thousand volunteers. She also called for the formation of a new modern Ukrainian Army.[53] Similarly, in Dnipropetrovsk, oligarch Igor Kolomoisky formed a private army composed of fighters from as far away as the United States to thwart Russian aggression.[54]

In the run-up to Ukraine's presidential election, the Kyiv government announced the resumption of conscription in response to increased Russian aggression. On May 2, in the deadliest day since February, some forty pro-Russian activists perished in Odessa when Kyiv loyalists set fire to a building they were sheltering in. The Russians condemned the incident, insisting it was a deliberate act of repression by the fascists in Kyiv.

On May 11 the self-proclaimed Peoples' Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk conducted referenda, alleging that the results showed popular support for independence from Kyiv and annexation to Russia, along the lines followed by Crimea. Despite the distraction Ukraine went forward with the election against Russia's wishes, and Poroshenko won handily. Despite Putin's statement that he would seek to work with the new leader of Ukraine, relations quickly deteriorated. Poroshenko pursued trade agreements with the EU, and in June Russia cut off natural gas exports to the country, claiming that Ukraine would not receive further supplies until it paid for past shipments.

On July 17 Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 crashed in eastern Ukraine, killing 283 passengers and 15 flight crew. The aircraft was widely believed to have been hit by a surface-to-air missile fired by separatist militia forces. The horrendous loss of life and the subsequent obstruction of investigators trying to examine the site led to increased diplomatic isolation of Russia and the strengthening of economic sanctions against Putin and his supporters. Nonetheless, Moscow continued aggressive support to separatists, especially when their tactical situation deteriorated.

Crisis (August 1–31)

Armed rebels barricaded their positions in the major cities and towns in eastern Ukraine, and sources claimed that Russian armed forces made up 15–80 percent of the combatants. Russian armored personnel carriers, artillery, and air defense equipment permeated the theater, but Moscow continued to deny involvement, as it had in Crimea.

On August 14, two dozen armored personnel carriers and other vehicles with Russian military plates crossed into Ukraine near the insurgent-controlled Izvaryne border crossing. NATO secretary general Anders Fogh Rasmussen confirmed that a "Russian incursion" into Ukraine had occurred. Russia continued to deny that any of its forces were operating in eastern Ukraine, but reports from both sides confirmed that at least a thousand Russian military personnel were actively supporting the insurgents. By late August Ukrainian civilians were reporting the appearance of Russian special forces. Ukrainian forces captured ten Russian paratroopers, forcing Moscow to admit to the presence of Russian soldiers. However, Moscow claimed that the soldiers had crossed the border by accident. With the infusion of Russian forces and supplies, the insurgents began to capture towns in the southeast near the Sea of Azov. President Poroshenko declared that Russia had launched a full-scale invasion of the country, and Western officials described the incursion as a "stealth invasion."

By the end of August, Russian-led insurgent forces brought renewed pressure on the airports in Luhansk and Donetsk and were threatening Mariupol again. It appeared that the government of Vladimir Putin refused to let the insurgents fail, and Russian forces intervened to the degree necessary to force cease-fire talks.

Resolution (September 1–November 30)

The OSCE coordinated peace talks in Minsk that resulted in a cease-fire on September 5. President Poroshenko had earlier proposed a fifteen-point peace plan, and its provisions were largely accepted by all sides. He promised greater autonomy for Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts as well as protection of the Russian language in the area. Heavy combat equipment was to be removed from the conflict areas, and prisoners were exchanged. Despite leaders in both Russia and Ukraine signaling their satisfaction with the cease-fire, fighting continued in the region.

The United States signaled increased support for Ukraine in September by leading a NATO peacekeeping exercise in the western part of the country. Resolution from the West and Poroshenko's political resilience and determination pushed Putin into a posture of reluctantly dealing with the Kyiv regime, and the two powers concluded a renewed natural gas deal in October. But Putin's hopes for a weakening of resolve among Ukraine's citizens expired at the end of the month when parlia-

mentary elections returned a strong pro-Western majority in the Rada. In response the rebels in Donetsk and Luhansk conducted their own local elections, which were condemned and dismissed by Kyiv.

By early November the cease-fire had given way to increasing violence in eastern Ukraine. Russian tanks crossed the border as part of battalion tactical groups. The Kyiv government outlined possible further invasion schemes that Russia may be contemplating, including:

- Invasion from Russian soil into northern and eastern Ukraine with objectives including Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, and Kyiv
- Invasion from Belarus into northeastern Ukraine
- Invasion from Transnistria into southeastern Ukraine (Note: Ukrainian intelligence reported that Russia had already deployed Cossack militias to Transnistria as provocateurs and possibly to spearhead an invasion.)
- Invasion from Crimea into eastern and central Ukraine

Restoration of Peace (November 30–Present)

As of this writing the Russians have failed to fully achieve their goals in eastern Ukraine, installing at best a "frozen conflict." There has been no clear restoration of peace. The Kyiv government continues to reach out to the West for economic and military aid, and President Poroshenko hopes to keep the issue of the Crimean annexation on the table. Simultaneously, to prevent further bloodshed and possible Russian invasion, he has tried to walk a fine line between acquiescence to Russia's gains and provocation that Putin could use as a pretext for further adventures. Russia, meanwhile, considers the Crimean annexation a fait accompli and has moved forward with economic development plans. Furthermore, Putin's regime intends to leverage the increased autonomy in eastern and southern Ukraine to further its policy goals there, including a secure land bridge from Russia to Crimea.

In December the US Congress passed a new sanctions bill, and President Obama signed it into law. The new provisions included the option to sell lethal military supplies and equipment to Ukraine at the discretion of the American president—another strong diplomatic signal to both Kyiv and Moscow.

Conclusion

Russian unconventional warfare and Moscow's innovative approaches to IO largely succeeded in the recent annexation of Crimea. Nonetheless, Russia's intervention in eastern Ukraine experienced difficulties, leading to an extended conflict. While

the current outcome for the Russians is mixed, it is clear that Russian leaders have absorbed the painful lessons of their post-Cold War setbacks, most notably those in Georgia in 2008. Over time they have observed and adjusted to American moves during the color revolutions and the 2010 Arab Spring. By viewing US foreign policy initiatives through the lens of geopolitics, Russian neoconservatives have embraced an aggressive foreign policy designed to reverse the losses associated with the collapse of the Soviet Union, especially along the Russian periphery. Driven by a desire to roll back Western encroachment into the Russian sphere of influence, the current generation of *siloviki* have crafted a multidisciplinary art and science of unconventional warfare. Capitalizing on deception, psychological manipulation, and domination of the information domain, their approach represents a notable threat to Western security interests.

A critical first step toward confronting modern Russian information warfare is to develop an understanding of its character and conduct. In conventional warfare, defenders learn to anticipate the likely "avenues of approach" that an attacking army might use. Similarly, nations and regions, particularly those on the periphery of the Russian Federation, can learn to anticipate Moscow's next steps in the use of unconventional warfare and its likely implications. When Western governments are knowledgeable of the broad range of capabilities associated with this new threat—including the use of agents, imported paramilitaries, deception, intimidation, and bribery; infiltration of political groups and government services; and persistent denial—they can fortify vulnerable sectors of society, including the media, religious organizations, political parties, and government agencies.

The United States and its allies must coalesce their defense strategies into whole-of-government efforts to confront and address the new types of threats emanating from the Russian Federation. Existing security treaties, including the NATO Charter, along with military doctrine, training, and country team practices, must evolve toward effective resistance against this form of warfare.

Notes

1. Simon Ostrovsky, "Serbian War Veterans Operating in Crime: Russian Roulette in Ukraine (Dispatch 5)," *VICE News*, 1:03, March 9, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFlLN9E2kcY&feature=youtu.be&list=PLw613M86o5o%205zqF6WJR8zuC7Uwyv76h7R.
2. Vignette based on reporting through CENSOR.NET, a Russian-language online news site based in Ukraine, accessed November 25, 2014, http://censor.net.ua/photo_news/273993/na_maneje_vse_te_je_rossiyiskie_patriotki_gastroliruyut_po_ukraine_fotoreportajvideo.
3. Simon Ostrovsky, "Getting Stuck on a Ukrainian Battleship: Russian Roulette in Ukraine (Dispatch 3)," *VICE News*, 7:45, March 6, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnpXASPd1h4&feature=youtu.be&list=PLw613M86o5o5zq%20F6WJR8zuC7Uwyv76h7R.
4. Jolanta Darczewska, "The Anatomy of Russian Information Warfare: The Crimean Operation, A Case Study." *Point of View* vol. 42 (Warsaw: Center for Eastern Studies, 2014), 14–17; 23-24.

5. Janis Berzins, *Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy* (Riga: National Defence Academy of Latvia, 2014), 8.
6. Samuel P. Huntington (ed.), *The Clash of Civilizations?: The Debate* (Tampa, FL: Foreign Affairs, 1993), http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/48950/samuel-p-huntington/the-clash-of-civilizations.
7. Vladimir Batyuk, "The End of the Cold War: A Russian View," *History Today* 49, no. 4 (1999): http://www.historytoday.com/vladimir-batyuk/end-cold-war-russian-view.
8. Mark Kramer, "The Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact, and the Polish Crisis of 1980-81," in *The Solidarity Movement and Perspectives on the Last Decade of the Cold War*, ed. Lee Trepanier et al. (Krakow: AFM Publishing House, 2010).
9. Karl E. Meyer and Shareen B. Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows: The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), Prologue.
10. Graeme P. Herd and Ella Akerman, "Russian Strategic Realignment and the Post-Post-Cold War Era?," *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 3 (2002).
11. Mykolas Gudelis, "Rethinking the People's Revolution: The Role of the Soviet Union and National Elites in Lithuania's Velvet Revolution," *Canon* (Interdisciplinary Journal of the New School for Social Research) (Winter 2011): http://canononline.org/?s=Rethinking+the+People%E2%80%99s+Revolution.
12. Richard Humphries, "Transnistria: Relic of a Bygone Era," *Japan Times*, October 8, 2001, http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2001/10/08/travel/transnistria-relic-of-a-bygone-era-2/#.VLARqHYo6JA.
13. Michael Coffey, "Military Learning between the Chechen Wars," *Vestnik* (Journal of Russian and Asian Studies), no. 5 (Fall 2006): http://www.sras.org/military_learning_between_the-chechen_wars.
14. Ibid.
15. "Oligarchs as Nation's Saviors? Berezovsky Justifies Himself," *St. Petersburg Times*, October 20, 2000.
16. Charles King, "The Five-Day War: Managing Moscow After the Georgia Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2008.
17. Darczewska, "Anatomy of Russian Information Warfare."
18. Ibid., 14.
19. Ibid., 17.
20. Valery Gerasimov, "The Value of Science in Prediction," *Military-Industrial Kurier*, February 27, 2013.
21. Nikolas K. Gvosdev, "Ukraine's Ancient Hatreds," *National Interest*, no. 132 (July–August 2014).
22. Ibid.
23. Adrian Karatnycky, "Ukraine's Orange Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2005.
24. Ibid.
25. glhermine, "Ukraine 2012," *World Elections* (blog), January 19, 2010, https://welections.wordpress.com/2010/01/19/ukraine-2010/.
26. For a general timeline of events during the Euromaidan crisis, see "The Ukraine Crisis Timeline," Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2014, http://csis.org/ukraine/index.htm.
27. William Safire, "Siloviki Versus Oligarchy," *New York Times*, November 5, 2003.
28. Gerasimov, "The Value of Science in Prediction."
29. Bill Powell, "How the KGB (and Friends) Took Over Russia's Economy," *Fortune*, September 4, 2008, http://archive.fortune.com/2008/09/04/news/international/powell_KGB.fortune/index.htm.
30. "Russia Defence & Security Report." *Russia Defence & Security Report*, no. 3 07/01 (2014).
31. Merle Maigre, "Crimea—The Achilles Heel of Ukraine" (International Centre for Defence Studies, 2008).
32. Dale R. Herspring and Roger N. McDermott, "Serdyukov Promotes Systemic Russian Military Reform," *Orbis* 54, no. 2 (2010): 284–301.
33. Dmitry Boltenkov et al., *Russia's New Army*, ed. Mikhail Barabanov (Moscow: Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, 2011), 55.
34. Ibid., 81.
35. Ibid., 21.
36. Irakliy Kmakhidze, "Armed Forces of Russian Federation Spotted along the Ukrainian Border and in Donbas," *Euromaidan Press*, August 27, 2014, http://euromaidanpress.com/2014/08/27/armed-forces-of-russian-federation-spotted-along-the-ukrainian-border-and-in-donbas/.

37. Mathew Aid, "More on Russian Spetsnaz Operations in Crimea and along Ukrainian Border," Personal blog, April 10, 2014, http://www.matthewaid.com/post/82280374358/more-on-russian-spetsnaz-operations-in-crimea-and.

38. Sergi Kozlov, "FSB Special Forces: 1998-2010," *Argentura*, September 8, 2010, http://www.argentura.ru/english/spetsnaz/FSBspecialforces/.

39. David Ignatius, "Russia's Military Delivers a Striking Lesson in Crimea," *Washington Post*, March 18, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/david-ignatius-russias-military-delivers-a-striking-lesson-in-crimea/2014/03/18/c1273044-aed7-11e3-9627-c65021d6d572_story.html.

40. Ibid.

41. Matthew Aid, "The Role of the GRU in Russia's Takeover of the Crimea," Personal blog, March 26, 2014, http://www.matthewaid.com/post/80776580075/the-role-of-the-gru-in-russias-takeover-of-the.

42. David Meadows, "Understanding Russia's Proxy War in Eastern Ukraine," *Security Sector Reform Resource Centre*, August 12, 2014, http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/2014/08/12/understanding-russias-proxy-war-in-eastern-ukraine/.

43. Maksym Bugriy, "The Crimean Operation: Russian Force and Tactics," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 11 no. 61 (April 1, 2014): http://www.jamestown.org/regions/europe/single/?tx_ttnews[pointer]=6&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=42164&tx_ttnews[backPid]=51&cHash=fc393270652afcca3fe0563fcc63c5a0#.VT5gQpOjYgk.

44. Albina Kovalyova, "Meet the Russian Orthodox Army, Ukrainian Separatists' Shock Troops," *NBC News*, May 16, 2014.

45. Alexander Marquardt, "Night Wolves Join Pro-Russia Side in Southern Ukraine," *ABC News*, February 28, 2014.

46. Simon Shuster, "Meet the Cossack 'Wolves' Doing Russia's Dirty Work in Ukraine" *Time*, May 14, 2014.

47. Alexander Vasovic, "Serbian Paramilitaries Join Pro-Russian Forces in Crimea," *Reuters*, March 14, 2014.

48. Pierluigi Pagani,"Crimea—The Russian Cyber Strategy to Hit Ukraine," InfoSec Institute, March 11, 2014, http://resources.infosecinstitute.com/crimea-russian-cyber-strategy-hit-ukraine/.

49. Aid, "The Role of the GRU in Russia's Takeover of the Crimea."

50. Louis Charbonneau, "U.N. Says Pro-Russia Rebels in Ukraine Murder, Kidnap, and Torture," *Reuters*, August 26, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/26/us-ukraine-crisis-rights-un-idUSKBN0gq1TA20140826.

51. Will Englund, "In Ukraine, Death and Protest Come with a History," Washington Post, January 28, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/in-ukraine-death-and-protest-come-with-a-history/2014/01/28/087daa72-85ca-11e3-8742-668814928ae4_story.html.

52. Daisy Sindelar, "In Eastern Ukraine, The Hunt for A Smoking Gun—And a Real Russian Holding It," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, April 15, 2014, http://www.rferl.org/content/ukraine-smoking-russian-gun/25334376.html.

53. Interfax-Ukraine, "Tymoshenko: 'Resistance Movement' in Ukraine Has over 20,000 Members," *KyivPost*, May 16, 2014, http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/tymoshenko-resistance-movement-in-ukraine-has-over-20000-members-348207.html.

54. Tomas Hirst, "Meet the 'Pocket Army' Funded by Sacked Ukrainian Billionaire Igor Kolomoisky," *Business Insider*, March 28, 2015, http://www.businessinsider.com/meet-the-pocket-army-funded-by-sacked-ukrainian-billionaire-igor-kolomoisky-2015-3.

Bibliography

Aid, Mathew. "More on Russian Spetsnaz Operations in Crimea and along Ukrainian Border." Personal blog, April 10, 2014, http://www.matthewaid.com/post/82280374358/more-on-russian-spetsnaz-operations-in-crimea-and.

——. "The Role of the GRU in Russia's Takeover of the Crimea." Personal blog, March 26, 2014, http://www.matthewaid.com/post/80776580075/the-role-of-the-gru-in-russias-takeover-of-the.

Balouziyeh, John. "Russia's Annexation of Crimea: An Analysis Under the Principles of Jus Ad Bellum." *LexisNexis International Law* (blog), April 14, 2014. http://www.lexisnexis.com/legalnewsroom/international-law/b/international-law-blog/archive/2014/04/14/russia-s-annexation-of-crimea-an-analysis-under-the-principles-of-jus-ad-bellum.aspx.

Batyuk, Vladimir. "The End of the Cold War: A Russian View." *History Today* 49, no. 4 (1999): http://www.historytoday.com/vladimir-batyuk/end-cold-war-russian-view.

Bauman, Robert F. *Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Afghanistan.* Leavenworth Papers vol. 20. Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, US Army Command and General Staff College, 1993.

Berzins, Janis. *Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy.* Riga: National Defence Academy of Latvia, 2014.

Boltenkov, Dmitry, Aleksey Gayday, Anton Karnaukhov, Anton Lavrov, and Vyacheslav Tseluiko. *Russia's New Army.* Edited by Mikhail Barabanov. Moscow: Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, 2011.

Bugriy, Maksym. "The Crimean Operation: Russian Force and Tactics," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 11 no. 61 (April 1, 2014): http://www.jamestown.org/regions/europe/single/?tx_ttnews[pointer]=6&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=42164&tx_ttnews[backPid]=51&cHash=fc393270652afcca3fe0563fcc63c5a0#.VT5gQpOjYgk.

Center for Strategic and International Studies. "The Ukraine Crisis Timeline." 2014. http://csis.org/ukraine/index.htm.

Charbonneau, Louis. "U.N. Says Pro-Russia Rebels in Ukraine Murder, Kidnap, and Torture." *Reuters*, August 26, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/26/us-ukraine-crisis-rights-un-idUSKBN0gq1TA20140826.

Coffey, Michael. "Military Learning between the Chechen Wars." *Vestnik* (Journal of Russian and Asian Studies), no. 5 (Fall 2006): http://www.sras.org/military_learning_between_the-chechen_wars.

Darczewska, Jolanta. "The Anatomy of Russian Information Warfare: The Crimean Operation, A Case Study." *Point of View* vol. 42. Warsaw: Center for Eastern Studies, 2014.

Englund, Will. "In Ukraine, Death and Protest Come with a History." *Washington Post*, January 28, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/in-ukraine-death-and-protest-come-with-a-history/2014/01/28/087daa72-85ca-11e3-8742-668814928ae4_story.html.

Frye, Barbara, Ioana Caloianu, and Anders Ryehauge. "Ukrainian Troops Close in on Rebel Stronghold, Armenian Villager Dies in Azerbaijan Custody." *Transitions Online*, August 11, 2014.

Gerasimov, Valery. "The Value of Science in Prediction." *Military-Industrial Kurier*, February 27, 2013.

German, Tracey. *Russia and the Caspian Sea: Projecting Power or Competing for Influence?* Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2014.

glhermine. "Ukraine 2012." *World Elections* (blog), January 19, 2010, https://welections.wordpress.com/2010/01/19/ukraine-2010/.

Gowan, Richard. "West Needs New Rules to Contain Proxy Wars with Russia." *World Politics Review*, July 21, 2014.

Gudelis, Mykolas. "Rethinking the People's Revolution: The Role of the Soviet Union and National Elites in Lithuania's Velvet Revolution." *Canon* (Interdisciplinary Journal of the New School for Social Research) (Winter 2011): http://canononline.org/?s=Rethinking+the+People%E2%80%99s+Revolution.

Gvosdev, Nikolas K. "Ukraine's Ancient Hatreds." *National Interest*, no. 132 (July–August 2014).

Herd, Graeme P., and Ella Akerman. "Russian Strategic Realignment and the Post-Post-Cold War Era?" *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 3 (2002): 357–372.

Herspring, Dale R., and Roger N. McDermott. "Serdyukov Promotes Systemic Russian Military Reform." *Orbis* 54, no. 2 (2010): 284–301.

Hirst, Tomas. "Meet the 'Pocket Army' Funded by Sacked Ukrainian Billionaire Igor Kolomoisky." *Business Insider*, March 28, 2015, http://www.businessinsider.com/meet-the-pocket-army-funded-by-sacked-ukrainian-billionaire-igor-kolomoisky-2015-3.

Humphries, Richard. "Transnistria: Relic of a Bygone Era." *Japan Times*, October 8, 2001.

Huntington, Samuel P. (ed.). *The Clash of Civilizations?: The Debate.* Tampa, FL: Foreign Affairs, 1993. http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/48950/samuel-p-huntington/the-clash-of-civilizations.

Ignatius, David. "Russia's Military Delivers a Striking Lesson in Crimea." *Washington Post*, March 18, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/david-ignatius-russias-military-delivers-a-striking-lesson-in-crimea/2014/03/18/c1273044-aed7-11e3-9627-c65021d6d572_story.html.

Interfax-Ukraine. “Tymoshenko: ‘Resistance Movement’ in Ukraine Has over 20,000 Members.” *KyivPost*, May 16, 2014, http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/tymoshenko-resistance-movement-in-ukraine-has-over-20000-members-348207.html.

Karatnycky, Adrian. “Ukraine’s Orange Revolution.” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2005.

King, Charles. “The Five-Day War: Managing Moscow After the Georgia Crisis.” *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2008.

Kmakhidze, Irakliy. “Armed Forces of Russian Federation Spotted along the Ukrainian Border and in Donbas.” *Euromaidan Press*, August 27, 2014, http://euromaidanpress.com/2014/08/27/armed-forces-of-russian-federation-spotted-along-the-ukrainian-border-and-in-donbas/.

Kozlov, Sergi. “FSB Special Forces: 1998-2010.” *Argentura*, September 8, 2010, http://www.argentura.ru/english/spetsnaz/FSBspecialforces/.

Kramer, Mark. “The Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact, and the Polish Crisis of 1980-81.” In *The Solidarity Movement and Perspectives on the Last Decade of the Cold War*, edited by Lee Trepanier et al. Krakow: AFM Publishing House, 2010.

Maigre, Merle, “Crimea—The Achilles Heel of Ukraine.” International Centre for Defence Studies, 2008.

Meadows, David. “Understanding Russia’s Proxy War in Eastern Ukraine.” *Security Sector Reform Resource Centre*, August 12, 2014, http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/2014/08/12/understanding-russias-proxy-war-in-eastern-ukraine/.

Meyer, Karl E., and Shareen B. Brysac. *Tournament of Shadows: The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia.* New York: Basic Books, 1999.

Niblett, Robin. “Nato Must Focus on the ‘Hybrid Wars’ Being Waged on the West.” *Financial Times*, July 17, 2014.

Olearchyk, Roman, and Neil Buckley. “How Russia Forced Ukraine into A Ceasefire with Rebels.” *Financial Times*, September 12, 2014.

“Oligarchs as Nation’s Saviors? Berezovsky Justifies Himself.” *St. Petersburg Times*, October 20, 2000.

Pagani, Pierluigi. ”Crimea—The Russian Cyber Strategy to Hit Ukraine.” InfoSec Institute, March 11, 2014, http://resources.infosecinstitute.com/crimea-russian-cyber-strategy-hit-ukraine/.

Powell, Bill. “How the KGB (and Friends) Took Over Russia’s Economy.” *Fortune*, September 4, 2008.

“Russia Defence & Security Report.” *Russia Defence & Security Report*, no. 3 07/01 (2014).

Safire, William. “Siloviki Versus Oligarchy.” *New York Times*, November 5, 2003.

Sarotte, Mary E. “A Broken Promise? What the West Really Told Moscow about NATO Expansion.” *Foreign Affairs*, September–October 2014.

Saytas, Andrius, and Aija Krutaine. “Ukraine Crisis Stokes Baltic Nerves Over Russia.” *Reuters*, March 3, 2014.

Schenkkan, Nate. “Band of Outsiders: How Sanctions Will Strengthen Putin’s Regional Clout.” *Foreign Affairs*, September–October 2014.

Sharafutdinova, Gulnaz. *Political Consequences of Crony Capitalism Inside Russia. Contemporary European Politics and Society.* Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010.

Shuster, Simon. “Meet the Cossack ‘Wolves’ Doing Russia’s Dirty Work in Ukraine.” *Time*, May 2014.

Sindelar, Daisy. “In Eastern Ukraine, The Hunt for A Smoking Gun—And a Real Russian Holding It.” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, April 15, 2014, http://www.rferl.org/content/ukraine-smoking-russian-gun/25334376.html.

Thompson, Mark. “Sanctions Hit Russian Oil and Banks.” *CNN Money*, September 12, 2014.

“The Ukraine Crisis Timeline.” Center for Strategic and International Studies 2014. http://csis.org/ukraine/index.htm.

US Central Intelligence Agency. “Ukraine.” *The World Factbook.* https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html.

Weaver, Courtney. “Malofeev: The Russian Billionaire Linking Moscow to the Rebels.” *Financial Times*, July 24, 2014.

Image credits:

Russian expansion in the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. By courtesy of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., copyright 2012; used with permission.

The role of nonmilitary methods in interstate conflict resolution. Modified from http://vpk-news.ru/sites/default/files/pdf/VPK_08_476.pdf, derived from Valery Gerasimov, "The Value of Science in Prediction," *Military-Industrial Kurier*, February 27, 2013 (translated by US Army Asymmetric Warfare Group).

Ukrainian ten-hryvnia note featuring Ivan Mazepa. By National Bank of Ukraine [Public domain], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AUAH_10_2006.jpg.

Stepan Bandera. By author unknown [Public domain], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ASBandera.jpg.

Map of Ukraine. US Central Intelligence Agency, "Ukraine," *The World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html.

Chernobyl reactor 4. By Carl Montgomery (Flickr) [CC-BY-2.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AChernobylreactor_1.jpg.

The Orange Revolution. By Serhiy [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Morning_first_day_of_Orange_Revolution.jpg.

Viktor Yanukovych. premier.gov.ru [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AViktor_Yanukovych_27_April_2010-1.jpeg.

Euromaidan. By Nessa Gnatoush [CC-BY-2.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AEuromaidan_Kyiv_1-12-13_by_Gnatoush_005.jpg.

Languages in Ukraine. By Tovel, Spesh531 (File:UkraineNativeLanguagesCensus2001detailed.PNG) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AUkraine NativeLanguagesCensus2001detailed-en.png.

Population density of Ukraine. By courtesy of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., copyright 2002; used with permission.

Sergei Aksyonov. Government.ru [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ASergey_Aksyonov_March_2014_(cropped).jpg.

Denis Pushilin. Andrew Butko [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC-BY-SA-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3A2014-05-09._%D0%94%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%8C_%D0%9F%D0%BE%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%B4%D1%8B_%D0%B2_%D0%94%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%86%D0%BA%D0%B5_271.jpg.

Russian leadership. Putin: Kremlin.ru [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AVladimir_Putin_-_2006.jpg; Medvedev: Kremlin.ru [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ADmitry_Medvedev_official_large_photo_-1.jpg; Lavrov: By OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (https://www.flickr.com/photos/oscepa/14951666127/) [CC-BY-SA-2.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ASergey_Lavrov_September_2014.jpg; Shoigu: Kremlin.ru [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ASergey_Shoigu_2013.jpg; Gerasimov, Kremlin.ru [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AValery_Gerasimov_(2012-11-09)_cropped.jpeg; Galkin, http://meridianamagazine.org/20140302/crimea-le-forze-russe-stanno-assumendo-il-controllo-di-aeroporti-e-basi/.

The oligarchs. Sechin: By Dyor, STRF.ru (Own work) [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ADYOR5284.jpg; Kovalchuk, http://www.dipinfo.ru/eng/gk/thailand/consulthailand; Rotenbergs, http://jewishbusinessnews.com/2014/03/21/us-treasury-department-sanctions-20-oligarchs-over-annexation-of-crimea/; Timchenko, http://www.timchenkofoundation.org/en/about/trustees/1/; Malofeev, By Barkovets (Own work) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AMalofeev2.JPG; Chemezov, By Сергей Березов (Own work) [CC-BY-SA-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3A%D0%A7%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B2.jpg.

NATO encroachment. (Left) By User:Patrickneil, based off of Image:EU1976-1995.svg by glentamara (Own work) [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC-BY-SA-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AHistory_of_NATO_enlargement.svg. (Right) Modified from Glentarma [Public domain], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Glentamara#mediaviewer/File:EU2004-2007.svg.

Igor Girkin. By http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJDG_iQTLRk [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AIgor_Ivanovich_Strelkov.jpg.

Alexey Mozgovoy. By День ТВ/DenTVinform Official Stream [CC-BY-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via *Wikimedia Commons*, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AAleksey_Mozgovoy_discusses_military_matters%2C_Aug_7%2C_2014.jpg.

SINE PARI